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LEAVES FROM THE LIFE

OF A

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

BY

JOHN AUGUSTUS O'SHEA.

Oh, combien des Auteurs les destins sont heureux!
Quels que soient leurs talens, leurs plaisirs sont extrêmes.
S'ils sont bons, le Public alors est content d'eux;
Sont-ils mauvais? N'importe! ils sont contens d'eux-mêmes.

L'Abbé Dourneau.

With a Portrait of the Author.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

PREFACE, I find by the dictionary, means "observations prefixed to a literary work, intended to inform the reader respecting the design, plan, etc." If that be a good definition, this is a bad preface. The idea of writing it came to me as I sent away my last line of copy, and executed a joyful dance-movement on the hearth-rug. I was pleased, for I felt that a burden was removed from my mind, and that a task which I had set myself had been accomplished. My original intention was to have brought down these reminiscences to the end of the Commune; but the book grew under my hands, and I have had to stop short of the promised goal.

The work, such as it is, has been written under some difficulties—a portion of it in England, a portion in the United States, and some pages at sea. I offer this as explanation of imperfections, not as excuse. With thanks to printers and publishers (how those patient compositors must have groaned over my crabbed fist!), I commit the leaves to the stream. Should the public like them as they drift by, and ask to see more of their sort, I daresay I may be able to pluck another crop from the tree of memory.

TO HIS OLD AND TRUE FRIEND,

Yely Bowes, Esq.,

TO WHOSE KINDLY OFFICES WAS MAINLY DUE THE OPPORTUNITY OF EXPERIENCES AS A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT,

These Volumes are Inscribed,

WITH HAND AND HEART,

BY THE WRITER.

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LEAVES FROM THE LIFE

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CHAPTER I.

The *Pension Bonnery*—Apparition of Béranger—The Irish Colony in the Latin Land—An Ingenuous Painter—John Mitchel: His Personality and Peculiarities—"'Way Down Tennessee"—A Pillar of Paganism—Queer way of showing Gratitude—A Windfall for the Writer—Farewell, Mitchel!

Towards the close of the Second Empire, a small colony of Bohemians were living in the Rue de Lacépède, a street near the Jardin des Plantes, in the French capital. I was of them. The street no longer exists; it was expropriated under the *régime* of Baron Haussmann, and is now, metaphorically speaking, sown over with salt. The house we

occupied, a *pension bourgeoise,* was a spacious one, and might have been a convent or a mansion of the ancient nobility in previous days. A famous house in its way, for here I believe it was Honoré de Balzac laid the scene of his great novel, "Père Goriot." Madame Bonnery, the landlady, was a charming, courtly, elderly dame from the provinces, with a taste for literature and money-making. I remember how the dear amiable woman used to tell me of the great sorrow of her life, and as the anecdote illustrates her ruling passions, it will be well to give it. A short, squat man, in a snuff-coloured coat, came to her one day to seek for lodgings. His eyes were bright, and as he took off his hat she noticed that he was bald, with a fringe of silken white hair to his broad, round intellectual forehead. She had no rooms to let, and he left. A minute or so afterwards one of her boarders rushed in, flushed with excitement.

"What has *he* been doing in our place? Whom

did *he* come to seek? *Mon Dieu!* How I wish I had been here! How I grieve that I missed him!"

"Of whom are you speaking?" queried Madame Bonnery.

"Of whom? Of the great poet, of course. Did you not know him?"

"I do not understand, I am all amaze," said Madame Bonnery. "What great poet?"

"Béranger," gasped the excited Frenchman.

The short, squat man, in the snuff-coloured coat, was the lyrist of the Napoleonic legend, the poet of the people, he whose songs will live as long as the language in which they are written.

Madame Bonnery nearly fainted from the excess of her emotion. "Had I but the remotest thought that it was he, I would gladly have given up my own apartments to him until some others were vacant. I would have taken him in for nothing. What a misfortune!"

It was. indeed, a misfortune; the fact that Béranger had lodged there would have made the house celebrated and have materially added to the income of Madame, for she might have raised her rents with a frank countenance, and would have got the increase without demur.

Those rents were low, and exactly suited my slender purse. I paid ninety-five francs, less than four pounds English, a calendar month, and for this modest sum, was fed and had a room on the first storey counting from the stars. This was previous to the Exhibition of 1867. When that most entertaining of world's fairs was opened, the board and lodging were raised to one hundred and twenty francs, owing to the anticipated dearness of provisions and influx of visitors. The visitors did not come, and the tariff of food in the remote district of our residence did not seem to grow exorbitant; but the rent was not lowered all the same.

At the time, I was supposed to be studying medicine, but my visits were more frequent to those halls of young delight at the dancing gardens, known as the Closerie des Lilas, than to the wards of the Pity Hospital. As I intend to make a clean breast of it in these "Leaves," which properly are to be looked upon in the light of confessions, I may here avow that I never took a degree, and at this moment am not qualified to vivisect even a Norway rat. I eked out subsistence by writing stories and news' letters; but though heroically poor, I had a light heart and buoyant spirit, and enjoyed myself with a zest that most millionaires would covet. If I did not learn the science of Galen, at all events, I made acquaintance with the bright and dark sides of the most fascinating metropolis in the world; cultivated the friendship of all the eccentric characters of the *Pays Latin*, and became familiar with the masterpieces of French literature. That was

the happiest and most fruitful period of my career.

In the boarding-house with me was O'H——, also a medical student, a tall, dark, thin stripling, the mirror of honour, who had been educated at Nice. He was nephew of an Irish law-lord, but in Irish politics took the side which is not encouraged by Government.

Then there was Nick Walsh, a kindly painter, with a flowing flaxen beard, and that transparency of complexion and the high tints so painfully apparent in those whom consumption has marked for its own. Poor Nick had his celebrity. He was arrested once in Dublin, and thrown into prison on suspicion of being the Fenian head-centre, James Stephens. This adventure sickened him with his native country, and he vowed he would leave it never to return until it was more settled, and he had become a great man. I think he was right to leave Ireland; it is hardly the

field for the artist with brush or chisel or pen; there is no present fair remuneration in the island, and but dim prospect of a better future for those who pursue callings unconnected with trade or politics. Nick passed most of his time in the Luxembourg Gallery, or in the Cluny Hotel; his favourite hero was Francis I. (how intimate I am with the long nose of that monarch!), and him he put on canvas in every attitude that he could have ever assumed, and in every part that he might have been imagined to have played—prancing on a barb or praying in an oratory, rebuking a jester or receiving an ambassador, kneeling to his lady-love or wearing Jove's aspect on the throne; at the chase, in battle, in the ball-room. I should know it, for I have watched my friend's pictures grow under his hands. I served him as model, helped him with the composition of his groups, and gave an odd hint as to colour which won undeserved esteem for my judgment,

for my notions coincided with his own. The truth is, we were both mad on the Veronese. Nick was not marvellous as a draughtsman, but he did pride himself on being a colourist. He had two weak points: he could invest a work with artistic merit, but he could not sell it, and he never could pick up a foreign language. Every alternate three months he spent in Florence. At Paris he was everlastingly extolling the city by the Arno, the glorious Uffizi Palace, and the entrancing promenades, where he could so readily chat with friends in that soft Italian tongue. At Florence he was lost in admiration of the city by the Seine, the gorgeous Louvre, and the unrivalled boulevards; and then, you must admit, French was the only true medium for conversation; it was a civilised mode of speech not like this enervated Italian.

Another Irishman, who had his nook in the *Pension Bonnery*, which he visited now and then,

but whose fixed residence was in the more fashionable quarter of the town, was the Hon. Captain Bingham, a brother to Lord Clanmorris. This gentleman at the time was Paris correspondent of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, and of a London military paper, and has since written a short narrative of his experiences in Paris during the siege by the Germans, and a sincere and painstaking volume on "The Marriages of the Bonapartes." Captain Bingham was a very favourable specimen of his class, and had a mind far above the conceits of some of our scions of modern nobility. An English education had not congealed his Irish warmth of feeling, and, better than the right to wear coat-armour, he could read and relish Horace.

The last Irishman in our colony was undoubtedly not the least, John Mitchel, and as he fills a page in contemporary history, I will be pardoned for according him more space than the others. It may be remembered that he was the

leader of the extreme section of the Young Ireland party in 1848, and had been sentenced to transportation for treason-felony. He spent five years in various prisons in Spike Island, Bermuda, and Van Dieman's Land, and subsequently escaped to New York. Going down south, he settled in Richmond, where he established a paper and became a fierce advocate of the cause of the Confederacy, to which he sacrificed the lives of two of his sons. When he heard of the death of the first, he gave a natural sigh, but consoled himself with the expression: "He could have had no more enviable fate. He died in honourable company." Fitting requiem for a brave man! Mitchel was, indeed, a whole-souled partisan of any cause he adopted, and went sometimes too far, as when he declared how pleased he would be if he had a plantation of fat niggers in Virginia. He died in Ireland some years ago, a few days after his return from banishment, and almost on the very

morning that he was placed at the triumphant head of the poll as a knight of the shire for Tipperary. In passing, I may say, from what I knew of the man, he would never have taken his seat had he survived. In all likelihood there would have been a scene in the House, as he would decidedly have declined to subscribe to the oath of allegiance. Nor, considering his antecedents, is it clear that he could have quietly subsided on a bench of St. Stephen's, consistently with his declared principles. His constituency did not then care a fig if he never darkened the threshold of the palace of Westminster with his presence; but that was before the epoch of the land agitation.

In Mitchel a great writer was lost. His style was as strong and lucid as that of Swift or Bolingbroke, his logic forcible, his humour cutting, his sarcasm merciless, and withal he could soar into realms of imagination, the most purely

poetic, or unbend from his accustomed rigidity, and indulge in passages of florid description that might turn many a word-painter by vocation green with envy. His short life of Clarence Mangan is one of the most touching pieces of biography with which I am acquainted, and his portrait of a Creole beauty in his *Jail Journal,* is perfect —one to bring up a vision of luscious loveliness as first perused, and to dwell in the memory for ever after.

This remarkable book is captivating in manner and full of classical quotations, including long excerpts from the Greek. It was written, the author assured me, as it purports to have been written, from day to day.

In person, Mitchel was tall and gaunt; his eyes were gray and piercing, his expression of countenance self-contained, if not saturnine, his features bony and sallow, with an inclining to the tawny tint: high cheeks and determined

chin, short and grizzled whiskers, and a thick black moustache complete his photograph, as he was when I met him. In manner, he was reserved, as unlike the Celt as may be; indeed he was not a Celt, but one of the Ulster stock, and in his accent and his deliberate and distinct enunciation, his northern birth and training were traceable. He was theson of an Unitarian clergyman, but in matters of religion, of which he seldom spoke, he was tolerant and broad-minded.

His eldest daughter, Henrietta, chose to become a Roman Catholic, but he never raised the slightest obstacle to her wishes. "How can I, who assume to be a champion of independence of judgment," he said, "consistently give my voice against it in others?" She was cut off in the bloom of youthful beauty, and lies under a mound in a convent of the Sacred Heart in a Parisian suburb.

As I was possessed of a very flattering letter of introduction to Mitchel from the late amiable John Martin, sometime M.P. for Meath, a man who would say a good word of the devil himself, his usual icy reserve melted to me at once. Besides, I was a friend of a bosom friend of his, the Rev. John Kenyon of Templederry, under whose roof I had made the acquaintance of some charming members of his family. We had tastes, too, in common; both loved to stroll about in any sort of careless dress in less frequented streets, in the "'tween dog and wolf" hour, and both had a dislike for those coffee-houses where it was dictated to you by a bye-law of Boniface that you should smoke a cigar, not a pipe. He was leading a quiet bachelor life, his family being in the United States, and acted as corrrespondent for a New York daily paper of Democratic (which there means Conservative) tone belonging to one

Wood. His room was on the same landing as mine, and there, or in mine, we held mild symposia of nights in company with any of our fellow-lodgers who chose to call. This grim conspirator of such cynical severity, when aught offended his sense of right, could be affable, and even communicative at times. But he never gushed or invited advances; he was always dignified, highly polished in demeanour, and hospitable, without obtruding his hospitality. He was very fond of having the young fellows in his sanctum, and liked to elicit our views on passing events—to "draw us out" I believe is the locution by which the process is known—and, by my troth! we were free to the verge of audacity in our criticisms on statesmanship, the *belles-lettres*, the follies of fashion, and the tendency of the age to Byzantine putrefaction. A young American artist, since settled in London, Charles Morgan, who

had fought on the Federal side in the Civil War, and a young Irishman, who had made a campaign in the service of the Holy See, were his ordinary guests.

How Mitchel used to relish the recital of their whimsical adventures in Paris streets, as he sat comfortably enjoying his pipe in his cosy chamber, his feet resting American-wise on top of the German stove, and an ungainly old drab sombrero of some soft material keeping his unbent countenance in shade. And he used to tell his anecdotes, too, and they were capital and more effective than I could hope to make them from the dry manner in which they were told. I recollect one.

"East Tennessee is a delightful country," said he; "I spent two years in its remotest part, in a sweet valley up in the mountains, hunting and farming. I had a corner of ground, about two hundred acres, in the embrace of a rushing stream.

The district was thinly settled, and the people rough as you please, but honest, blunt, manly fellows. A little thing created a sensation in that community, and they wondered what brought a stranger like me amongst them. I found that a report was soon put in circulation that I had discovered a mine, and was going to make all their fortunes. I needn't tell you the mine was never worked. But they became very inquisitive about my religion. I rode to the post-office one day.

"'We was remarking up in here, sir,' said the postmaster, 'that you weren't in the Methodist church, where we had a fine preacher yesterday.'

"'Reason why,' I answered, 'I'm not a Methodist.'

"'Nor in the other church, the Presbyterian,' continued the postmaster.

"'Reason why, I'm not a Presbyterian.'

"'Then,' said he, scratching his head, 'what were you in the old country?'

"'An unworthy member of the Pagan persuasion,' I answered.

"The Tennessean looked mystified. 'Wall, I never,' said he at last, 'are there many of yourn over thar?'

"'Yes,' I answered; 'I was a pillar of that church,' and put spurs to my horse."

Mitchel was a fervent hater, and did not dissemble his feelings of any man, but said out boldly and at once his opinions of him if challenged. I happened to bring in on one occasion the name of a popular advocate in Ireland, who pretended to an intense affection for the cause with which the Young Irelander had been identified, and who subsequently rose to be a leader of the National party. As he is dead, I omit mention of his name.

"There is not an honest bone in that man's body," was Mitchel's instant remark.

Again, an Oxford professor, garrulous on philanthropy, turned up in discourse.

"When I read anything from his pen, I always know him for an impostor," was his ready comment.

I told him of an Irishman who had gained a fortune in a distant colony, and had come home to make his wealth a stepping-stone to such social eminence as attaches to the representation of a corrupt borough.

"Infernal rascal!" was his ejaculation—a favourite phrase of his for all that was bad and base in humanity. In his epistles to the New York journal to which he contributed, he was inveighing with much bitterness against the administration of the Second Empire, and I seized an opportunity to allude to it delicately, saying it seemed to be his destiny to be always in opposition.

"Yes," he acquiesced, with a short laugh.

"I was discontented in Ireland, I saw much to displease me in the United States, and I suppose, if I were here long enough, I would get myself into hot water, too, and be shown to the frontier, if not to Cayenne."

He suffered much from asthma, the disease which ultimately carried him off. Talking once of his malady, which obliged him often to court repose in an arm-chair instead of in bed, he admitted that the sentence of deportation which consigned him to a dry climate had been the means of prolonging his days, so that the British Government, in seeking to inflict a punishment, had actually done him an unintentional service.

"A queer way you have of showing your gratitude," ventured I.

He chuckled as he pleaded guilty to the impeachment. When he was tired of our company, he courteously dismissed us, and long

after, in the watches of the night, I could hear him pacing in his room; for it was his habit to waste the midnight oil, and in the still, lone hours beyond the twelve, when his thoughts were at the richest, and there was nothing to disturb them, his most vigorous letters were written.

Vividly I remember the day Mitchel left Paris. He called me into his room and said: "You are not too well off. Would you like to earn a little money?"

"Most certainly. I would be grateful for the chance."

"I am going back to America, and have been asked to find a substitute to do work similar to what I have been doing for Wood's paper. Would you accept four pounds English for two letters a week?"

"Only too delighted."

Here was a windfall. Four pounds, one

hundred francs, a week — more than I could live upon for a month! In fancy what parties to Saint Cloud I meditated. How I could astound less fortunate comrades with my munificence! Why, I could choose from a bill of fare with the best, and quaff generous wine, with the grape blood in it, not the thin liquid of the boarding-house. Who knows what this engagement might lead to? It was the first step upon the ladder. I should assuredly become famous, and in a vista not remote I already saw myself sitting in my box at the Opera, driving my mail-phaeton in the Bois, lounging into the Jockey Club, courted by the wits of the period and bandying epigram for epigram, honoured, peradventure, one auspicious morning with a three-line paragraph in the *Figaro* or *Gaulois!* O Youth, thou time of rosy illusion, when the visions of hope take the tinge of reality, what an unconscionable cheat thou art!

Mitchel broke in upon my waking dream with an account of a farewell visit he had paid to the Irish College. "Those youthful seminarists," he said, "appear to be fine fellows. I am afraid both they and I transgressed rules. They gathered round me and gave me a most unecclesiastical cheer, and I made them a short speech in return, which was hardly tinctured with theology. As I am leaving after dinner, you had better take this bottle of brandy, what is left of it, and also the logs which are in my cupboard."

And the member of the Jockey Club, who had been driving by the Lake to get up an appetite for a banquet of the Lucullus kind previous to lolling into the Temple of Harmony to hint supercilious exceptions to the reigning *prima donna*, opened the cupboard, stooped, and loading himself with an armful of faggots, conveyed them across the landing to his own narrow chamber.

As night fell, we mustered in Mitchel's room to bid him "Good-bye."

"My friends," he said, "I would give you a parting glass, but I cannot, unless O'Shea will oblige."

O'Shea did oblige out of what remained in a certain *aqua vitæ* bottle, and the man who had won so much upon our impressionable souls, shortly after, muffled in his bravo-like cloak, disappeared in the twilight on his way to the railway station for Havre. It was the last I saw of John Mitchel. I was sorry to have to say adieu to one I had learned to esteem, but how jubilant the thought that I at length was connected with a leading diurnal organ of public opinion, even though it was published so far away as New York.

CHAPTER II.

Ingenium laudatur et alget—An Appeal for Money—Our Foreign Fellow-boarders—Raoul Rigault and the Irish Student—Rochefort—*Amour, quand tu nous tiens!*—The Writer makes a Proposal of Marriage—A Marquis of the Empire—Searching for an Insurrection—How a Great Paris Paper was *not* Started—Montbard and the Writer make out the Cause together—Victor Noir.

I WORKED assiduously for that Transatlantic paper—its title I now forget, nor can I even say whether its proprietor's Christian name was Fernando or Benjamin—expending much pains on the opening letter. To my extreme gratification, when the sheet came back to Paris with that letter in it, there was a leaded notice under the leading articles—a "leaderkin," my friend, Mr. Godfrey Turner, who is a stickler for the purity of

English, would call it—drawing attention to the brilliancy, the wit, the discrimination of the production.

"We have always been lucky in our European correspondents," said the Manhattan editor. "The last was a gentleman of world-wide reputation; and he who steps into his shoes is no unworthy successor, as his admirable communication in another portion of our present impression conclusively testifies. He is one of the brightest and most level-headed of writers."

My head was not level when I read that compliment. It revolved with the vertigo of elation, was upside down, sloping, perpendicular, anything but level. I was seriously thinking of putting a team of thoroughbreds instead of cocktails to that mail-phaeton *in prospectu*, and of commissioning Nick Walsh to paint a historical portrait of myself. But the four pounds a week did not come with a pleasant punctuality, and

the conviction forced itself gradually upon me that panegyric does not make the pot boil. I waited for a reasonable time and sent a polite reminder to the office. A month's delay expired. No answer was returned. I repeated my application in a business shape. Again no answer. As a final resort, for I was getting into low water, having lapsed into extravagance on the strength of the immense fortune into which I had fallen, I sent a missive, somewhat in the following form, to the man Wood, whose Christian name I cannot recall:

"DEAR SIR,

"Yesterday afternoon, as I was walking on the Italian boulevard, I met a lady friend of surpassing beauty, and virginal candour—I am sure you would like her—and she asked me to pay for her a glass of vermouth. Being gallant I could not refuse. Vermouth is an

appetiser. A dinner followed. I flatter myself I can order a good dinner. Delicate viands demand generous wine. After the repast came liqueurs, coffees; for myself, cigars; for Madame, a choice bouquet from a passing flower-girl. We moved to the terrace of the café, met some of my lady friend's lady friends, and uncorked sundry bottles of the Veuve Cliquot's rarest vintage. The bill was presented—a habit they have here. It was one hundred and twenty francs. 'Bah,' I said, 'a mere detail. Mr. Wood, of New York, owes me a thousand francs; besides, do you know who I am? I am one of the brightest and most level-headed of writers; read it for yourself. You should consider it an honour to have me in your books.' And how think you, did the caitiff act? He called me an impudent swindler, a vile impostor, and shed many other aspersions on my character. The waiters scorned me, the ladies laughed, and

ultimately a police officer laid his hand upon my collar, and conducted me to the cells. I am now pining there, in tremulous anticipation of my trial. Will you kindly help a dull and vertical-headed martyr out of his loathsome captivity?"

The money came by next mail, but the man whose Christian name I forget had the un-Christian wickedness to publish my appeal in full. His paper, whose title I cannot recall, passed the same week into other hands, and thus ended my connection with the Press of the great United States. Therefrom I deduce a maxim for the guidance of young writers, for these confessions are intended to be didactic as well as entertaining: Never contribute to a paper on the other side of the globe unless you have a guarantee of its solvency, and the honour of its owners, or unless *you are*

paid in advance. A threat that you will annihilate a man, unless he discharges his debts, is toned down to the gentlest of remonstrances in its passage across three thousand miles of ocean.

Of course, there were others besides Irishmen in the *Pension.* We had two or three young Frenchmen who were walking the hospitals, a law-student, and a student in pharmacy — for this was the quarter of the schools — a Russian, whose sole object was to learn French for trade purposes, a semi-civilised Roumanian who believed himself to be another Demosthenes, and Axel Klint, a grave and honest Dane, who was visiting foreign lands and making notes of their manners, previous to filling a professorial chair in Copenhagen. He knew the maiden he was to marry when he went back, the match had been made by their respective parents; he knew the house he would occupy, and the stipend—

some eighty pounds per annum — on which he would have to rear the family which is indispensable to the happiness of every grave and honest Danish household. He knew, I think, the exact spot of earth in which he would be buried when he had run through the methodical round of his phlegmatic being. His wants were few, his aspirations humble, yet, looking back to-day I feel that he has had a more desirable lot than those of his co-mates whose spirits were torn by the restless longing to do something and be somebody, supposing it were only to drive a mail-phaeton of their own, and be hailed as the author of a comedietta.

This sojourn in Paris had many spells. One was in the movement; one felt that he lived and did not merely vegetate. It was not academic, but there were lessons to be learned in every stone wall glowing with historic memories; and when the wish was uppermost one could

add to his stores of knowledge as freely and perseveringly as if in a hermitage. That most useful of all lore, the knowledge of mankind, was to be amassed. By attrition with eager and sprightly minds, intelligence was awakened and emulation enkindled. There was every aid for acquiring polish without degenerating into priggishness. Thrown, as we were, into the midst of Bohemian society, we naturally made the acquaintance of many of the turbulent denizens of the neighbourhood, who were anxious to build up Constitutions when they should be attending their lectures in the Sorbonne or elsewhere. The student is in chronic opposition, and at this period disaffection to the Empire was the mode. There was one medical student, a certain Raoul Rigault, who singled himself out from his fellows by the irregularity of his habits, the extravagance of his loud talk and his demented antipathy to the existing govern-

ment, and to all systems of religion. He had his little notoriety, and amongst those of his associates who regarded him as a coming man, he had his following of parasites. The story was told of him that he had been one day dragged out of the Luxembourg Gardens because he had made proclamation of his hot patriotism by hissing "Partant pour la Syrie" as it was played by a military band which was amusing the public. There was another story that he had called out *calotin*—a term of opprobrium for priests—as a man in *soutane* and round-topped, wide-brimmed, clerical hat walked inoffensively by. But the man happened to be a sturdy native of Munster, who had not yet received his tonsure, and the promptings of the flesh being stronger in him than the meekness of the Lord, he turned round, tucked up his *soutane*, and gave his insulter such a sound drubbing as taught him to keep a civil tongue in his

head to ecclesiastics for the rest of that day.

There was another cock of the students' roost, one Gambetta, a burly, boisterous Gascon advocate, with the reputation of not being half a bad fellow, who frequented the Café Procope and shook its chandeliers with his vibrating periods. A long, lanky, sallow-faced writer who had served his apprenticeship on the minor journals, one who had been a clerk of the municipality before he took up the mordant pen of political pamphleteer, was spoken of as likely to create a stir. His name was Rochefort; he had a bulging, bomb-like forehead, a pretty wit, keen as a lancet, a title in his family, but not many centimes in his pocket. So poor was he at the outset of his literary career, that the tradition ran in the quarter that he and a companion had been accustomed to play dominoes for the odd lumps of sugar furnished with their cups of black coffee.

Wandering about the gardens, the gymnasia, the lecture-halls, the reading-rooms and the night resorts of the Latin Land, I came in contact with many of those who were destined to take prominent parts in the terrible events of that tremendous drama, which was then being subterraneanly rehearsed. There was an indefinable something in the air which presaged the storm; here and there were signs that the mercury was in ebullition; people spoke prudently in public but violently in secret; apart from the bourgeois, whose engrossing care was his own comfort, the butterfly of fashion and the foreigner, there was a strong under-element of inquietude, seething and churning. Working Paris wore a look of sulky defiance, and the connoisseurs in those things whispered that the periodical Revolution had almost come due. On the surface all was gay and sunshiny. Luxurious equipages rolled on the Champs Elysées, music

rang out by the fountain in the Palais Royal, Dumas wrote novels and Sardou wrote comedies, the Tuileries flashed light from every window, there were receptions where fair women hung upon the arms of brave men, and reviews of troops in resplendent uniforms, and I—for one is not debarred by the *res angustæ domi* from that in France—had the chance, when I chose, of exchanging my careless student attire for the conventional swallow-tail, and mixing in the Royalist assemblies of the Faubourg Saint Germain.

Even in our own *Pension* we had our weekly dances—charming gatherings they were, none the less charming for being conducted economically—but they wrought havoc upon some of our hearts. The Russian, O'H——, Walsh and myself simultaneously fell head and ears in love —but not with the same siren.

The Russian proposed to a lady of mature

age who had a marriageable daughter. The lady was flattered, but had to decline, as it transpired she had a husband already living. Russians cannot have much fortitude. The disappointed swain got drunk for three days. The remedy was effectual. When he recovered his senses, he thought no more of his idol.

Gentle Alfred O'H—— was hit very hard by a *petite* Bretonne with black orbs, beady and blazing but myopic. I undertook to negotiate my friend's suit. The damsel and her guardian were willing until I told them that O'H—— was only possessed of a small annuity, and had a hereditary tendency to homicide. The former piece of information would have been sufficient, for although mademoiselle had the nobiliary particle, she had no dowry. O'H—— I dissuaded from his devotedness by the assurance that it would be the height of folly for him, a short-sighted man, to wed a short-sighted woman—

it would be a case of the blind leading the blind, a downright cruelty to a possible progeny —and, furthermore, the attitude of a six-footer helping a duodecimo Venus hardly up to his elbows over a gutter would be ridiculous. The engagement was broken off, and I was happy in the consciousness that it was better for both parties. To the present, I do not regret my pious lie about the hereditary tendency to homicide.

There was no difficulty with Walsh; he was too disinterested to link the fate of her he adored with his, while his source of livelihood was precarious. Like a philosopher he shut himself up in his *atelier*, and read the autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini, that splendidly presumptuous brawler and masterly worker in metals. But he had a solace that was denied the rest of us. He adorned the walls of his room with sketches of his *inamorata* in pencil, charcoal, sepia, water

colours, and oils. Art, for those who are of its true disciples, is the supreme consolatrix.

My siren could not sing nor finger the piano —a blessing; but what a springy step in a *galop*, what a frank, hearty manner, what a captivating smile, and how pleadingly she used to follow me with the limpid, moist gaze of affection wherever I moved! I'faith, without conceit, she fell in love with me first. She was a willowy brunette, not highly educated or accomplished, but the makings of an excellent housewife. Her father was a Marquis, with all the aniline dyes in his blood, but, like many of the patricians of the Bourbon creation, without fortune. The witching Caroline had a small portion of thirty thousand francs, and I had nothing more tangible than my expectations. I formally proposed, and the morning after I had dispatched my protocol was aroused by a tapping at the door of my lodging in the attic. I asked who was there, and

was answered in a voice which struck me as that of the aged sire of my beloved. What a fluttering in my bosom!

"*Pardon, mon cher Monsieur, ayez la bonté de m'attendre un instant.*"

This is abrupt, I thought. He might have given me notice of his coming, but I supposed it was their French usage, and the artful patriarch wished to ascertain if I was an early riser. I hastily threw on a dressing-gown, and opening the door, made a bow of the Sir Charles Grandison depth, and said suavely:

"*Monsieur le Marquis, faites-moi l'honneur d'entrer.*"

"Ah! my dear sir, you know me then. I am indeed a Marquis: the Great Man himself ennobled me, but I have not used the title since I fell upon evil days. The *garçon* below, a friend of mine, told me you had a generous heart and some old clothes which you would be

sure to give in charity to a veteran of the First Empire."

The miscreant! And yet, why should I blame the unfortunate veteran? It was not his fault, but I trust I will be forgiven if I lost my temper and sent him away empty-handed by those who have experienced what it is to be bound in the firm bonds of a huge and holy attachment.

I had not long to wait for an answer to my proposal; it came—a rejection—in the handwriting of my darling's mother, the Marchioness, enclosed in an envelope with a red seal, big as a crown-piece, crusted over with armorial bearings. The dear creature was sadly cut up, I was told, and in conscience so was I, but pride came to my relief. Where is Caroline now? Is she a mother, or a mother abbess, or does she comb the tresses of Saint Catherine? I cannot picture her dead, for she had a healthy

constitution, and came of a long-lived race. Wherever she is I wish her all gifts that are good and gracious, and think of her with fondness. I have never grieved that I was the victim of an unrequited infatuation. The *grande passion* filled me with a delicious ecstasy, gave golden visions to my mental view, and kept me straight while it lasted.

It was whilst under the influence of this opiate of the soul, that events of a troublous nature occurred in Ireland. There came tidings of a rising for independence which was about to be inaugurated in that country; and O'H——, who did not know how to appraise the talk of revolution there, resolved to go over and join in the fray at his own expense. He did more; he paid the expenses of an American captain who went with him as far as London, but preferred to take his share in the war for liberty in the mountain passes round Leicester Square.

O'H—— had imagined that the fiery cross would be speeding through the island, that green flags would flutter in every breeze, and pike-points glance in every sunbeam. His notions had evidently been taken from Miss Porter's "Scottish Chiefs." He returned a sadder, a wiser, and a poorer man. He had travelled hither and thither, and had met no armed band. At last he determined to drive down to the village in the County Cork, near where the property of his family was situated, and try and raise an insurrection on his own account. But generations had grown up which knew not Joseph. On his arrival in C——, he was accosted by a policeman, who requested him to accompany him to the barracks. Then he discovered he was under arrest. He was a stranger and had been observed consulting a map! Forthwith he was searched and thrown into a cell by a brutal sub-inspector, who was in-

furiated at O'H——'s attempt to sing the "Marseillaise," and at his own ignorance of what it meant. That sub-inspector should not be condemned hastily. He may have had a nice ear. A number of photographs were found amongst the young patriot's effects, and were taken to the nearest magistrate's residence.

"Why, those are all connections of my own!" he exclaimed as he examined them. "I must go and see this horrible traitor."

The horrible traitor was a relative, and was conveyed in honour to the house of the worthy Justice, where he was entertained at dinner and shown the arsenal of blunderbusses and pistols, the iron window-shutters, the ramparts of sand, and all the elaborate preparations which had been made for those rascally Fenians.

As for the sub-inspector, the moment he found his captive was the nephew of the lawlord, he almost went on his knees to beg that

he might be forgiven, and that no notice would be taken of the unfortunate mistake.

In the course of my strolls through the Latin quarter, I came across one of the staff of the *Gaulois*, a master of piquant style, Eugène G——. He wrote the social article on the opening page of the paper twice a week. He had been trained for the Church, but had quitted the seminary, which had small attractions for him, to join the Pontifical Zouaves. After the affair at Mentana, he returned to France and wrote a novel which displayed much archæological research, but gave no token of those sly, satiric touches which recommended him to the notice of the conductors of the daily paper which was running Villemessant's *Figaro* so close in its own department. We grew familiar, and he confided to me that he had a grand idea. He had secured a capitalist who had been to the United States, and had prevailed on him to

embark his money in the establishment of a newspaper of a novel type in Paris, since it would combine the best features of the English, American, and French press. He engaged me to write the *feuilleton*, which I forthwith set about. The title was settled, "La Cocarde Verte," and enormous yellow placards with the name of the proposed organ, *La Journée*, and the list of intending contributors, including, if I remember aright, such worthies as Edmond About, Francisque Sarcey, Jules Claretie, Eugène Chavette, Louis Leroy, the brothers De Fonvielle, and Léon Cahun, were posted about the city. A meeting of the staff of *La Journée* to plan out the first number was convoked one evening in a private *salon* at Véfour's. There were "cakes and ale," and Havannahs of a superior brand, and quite a galaxy of literary notabilities came together. G—— was full of his project and mighty fussy. He made arrangements for his

introductory leader, his theatrical and musical criticisms, his reviews, chroniques, and *faits divers,* and at last he called on me to say had I my copy ready.

"I had no notification it was wanted so soon."

He put on a fine fury, and threatened that he would hold me accountable, under a penalty of twenty thousand francs, if I had not the first instalment in the printer's hands by the following Thursday.

"*Soit,*" I answered, "it shall be forthcoming," but I was puzzled to make out where he could get that twenty thousand francs, should anything occur to hinder me from fulfilling my promise.

Then the curtains were closely drawn, the doors shut, the key-holes stuffed, the gas lowered, and a slim gentleman with an Italian name stood out in the middle of the sumptuous apartment, amid a hush of expectation. What was the meaning of this? Were they going to

celebrate some modern form of Eleusinian mysteries? I was not long left in suspense. The Italian recited an ode of the exiled Victor Hugo. That was the explanation of all these precautions. The recitation was given in a subdued voice, and was not remarkably good; but the applause, if muffled, was intense, and there was a thrill of compressed excitement on every lip, and a flash of frenetic sympathy in every eye. These Frenchmen were tasting forbidden fruit. That was the secret of their animation. From this, some notion may be drawn of the malcontent forces, which were silently operating under the doomed empire.

Léon Cahun and I "stewed" over "La Cocarde Verte," and had the instalment ready at the appointed hour, but *La Journée* never lit up the horizon. The capitalist tired of dipping into his purse. Your average Frenchman, while extravagant in matters of show, is parsimonious

at bottom, and utterly lacks the audacity of the speculator. As for G——, he disappeared no one knew how or whither, but he managed to get in my debt, where he still remains, before he vanished. He may have been more to be pitied than condemned; but I fear me much he was slightly a humbug.

George Loyes, a vivacious Burgundian chum of mine, was then pushing his way to the front as an artist. As he was possessed of unwearying industry and a weird vein of originality, it is no surprise that he has since won deserved fame in England by landscape drawings, in which daring effects of light and shade are skilfully brought out, in the *Illustrated London News* and the *Graphic*. Those who remember the signature, "Montbard," will recognise his pencil. In our joyous circle he was best known as Apollo. The beamy god of the bow and lyre and I struck up an alliance, and

ingenious were the shifts we were sometimes put to in order to raise funds for some coveted merrymaking in delectable Saint Cloud, or a trip to the painters' retreat of Barbizon, on the edge of the forest of Fontainebleau. One innocent device of ours was to invent the history of some foreigner of strange antecedents, who had dropped in upon the capital of pleasure to squander his gold, establish a religion, expound a startling scientific theory, exploit an undreamt-of motive power, or exhibit some impossible beast from an unexplored region. Apollo supplied the sketches, and I the text, and as often as not the one suggested the other. These were given in a weekly journal, called the *Chronique Illustrée,* and the ready reward that sweetens toil lent inspiration to the *collaborateurs.* In turn, we mystified the lieges with an account of the Botocudos Indians who lived upon pounded chalcedony, of the four-legged birds from the

interior of New Guinea, of the field-piece which could be transported through the ether from one position to another by the simple revolution of its own wheels, and of the human being who had been frozen in the Antarctic circle fifty years before, but had providentially been thawed back into vitality and juvenility. Apollo occupied with his mother the first floor over the renowned Mère Moreau's, a house in a passage between the quay and the Rue de Rivoli, where prunes, cerises, and other varieties of fruity tid-bits steeped in rectified spirit were dispensed by barmaids—the first of the craft in Paris—to idlers of capricious palate. I called on him one forenoon to consult as to the illustrations to a story of mine, "The Autobiography of a White Cravat," and met a big, boisterous, broad-shouldered young fellow, with crisp black hair, and a laughing red face, who was descending the stairs three steps at a time.

"Who is your friend, Apollo?" I asked.

"A journalist, *mon cher;* there is his card on the table."

I read Victor Noir in script, and scribbled underneath an address at Nueilly (*sic*), an error gross as that of the Englishman who would put the "e" before the "u" in Tuesday.

"He, a journalist! Why, he cannot spell."

"Just so, that is his certificate of identity; but he is smart and good-natured as a great Newfoundland dog that he is, and is liberal with passes for the theatres where he has his *entrées. Tiens!* The other night Tricot asked him for an order, and he wrote it on the spot. 'But the orthography is all wrong,' said Tricot. 'So much the better,' cried Noir, with a guffaw, 'they'll know it is not a forgery.'"

The real name of this jocund, full-blooded young giant was Salmon. His elder brother, Louis, had served in the Crimea, and a volume

of his, narrating the exploits and quaint devilries of the Zouaves in the campaign, was as great a favourite with Napoléon as Gleig's "Subaltern" with the Iron Duke. Destiny uses queer agents to compass its ends. Who could have foreseen that on the life of the overgrown boy I had casually crossed would hinge the fortunes of an Empire, and that the pistol-shot which gave premature quietus to this great Newfoundland dog would precipitate the funeral volley over the grave of the Bonaparte dynasty? Yet even so it was.

CHAPTER III.

We change Quarters—Pitchforked into Fortune—The new *Pension*—A Relic of Waterloo—Scotch Bluntness—A Visit to Napoleonic Shrines—Buonaparte's Sweetheart—Trip to Brussels—The Belgian Guide's Complaint—The Eternal Want of Pence—Success to Cholera Morbus—The Last Muster of the Grand Army—"*Vive* the Dead Emperor!"—Gustave Courbet, Iconoclast.

WHEN we were evicted from the Rue de Lacépède, in that quiet imperious way characteristic of the man who rebuilt Paris, we moved, lodgers in a body, bag and baggage, to a boarding-house in the adjacent Rue des Fossés St. Victor, at the back of the Panthéon. It was said, at the time, that the broadening and alignment of streets were undertaken quite as much with the object of finding employment for the army of workmen

and depriving insurrection of its pet battle-grounds, as of beautifying and ventilating the capital. If Baron Haussmann and his master thought that they could cut off the heads of "the revolutionary hydra" by their plan they were wofully mistaken. M. Thiers, that physical pigmy, who fancied himself such a military Colossus, lived to see his famous belt of fortifications in the hands of the mob they were devised to overawe, and—destiny ironical!—that mob was opposing the forces of order directed by M. Thiers himself. And the magnificent new Paris was fated to be ridged with the most artistic set of barricades the peaceful ever shuddered at. Discontent, when serious, will never be at a loss for the means of entrenching itself in the metropolis of France; the widest thoroughfare can be blocked in half-an-hour by the ruins of demolished houses, and the cemeteries with their maze of sheltering tombstones are as pretty arenas of combat as a madman

with a Phrygian cap and a chassepot rifle could desire. This wholesale system of expropriation was looked upon as an unavoidable grievance, and borne with meekly; those who were expropriated often made money by the process, and there were whispers that some scandalous jobs were connived at by the authorities of the Hôtel de Ville. One owner of a café was reputed to have been lifted into the select cohort of millionaires by successive expropriations. Hardly had he taken down the shutters in his establishment and begun to rub his hands at his excellent business prospects —his customers always came in droves from the first day—when the stern mandate was issued that he must leave: the space he occupied was wanted for a projected boulevard. His grief was soothed by a round sum as compensation for his damaged fortunes, and he migrated to another neighbourhood. It was strange, very strange, that the next site he pitched upon was similarly

needed, just as he had opened a brisk trade with the faithful customers who followed him wherever he went. This occurred three times. His sister was high in the domestic service of a civic architect, but this may have been a mere coincidence.

The new *Pension* was approached by a long avenue lined on one side with a series of rooms, or rather of cottages of one room. There was a clear view of a dead wall in front. To these rooms we young fellows were assigned, to our intense delight. In the first place, we could come and go at our own sweet will; we could kick up our heels with impunity; and lastly, there was a sort of my-house-is-my-castle consciousness in the tenancy. Our circle was augmented here by the addition of three aged officers. One was a Scotchman, who had served in the Foreign Legion in Africa; the second a captain of dragoons, whose exploits were confined

to having once escorted Charles X. from the Tuileries to Versailles; and the third a patriarch, with the St. Helena medal, who had fought at Waterloo. The last-mentioned sat next me at table. To one brought up in the notion that Waterloo was the greatest engagement that ever was decided, and who was fond in boyhood of listening to the marvellous yarns of the "fogeys" who had served in the Peninsula—always cheerfully repaid by the gift of a few pence for tobacco—this was a treat. The idea of conversing with a survivor of the Grand Army, with a warrior, albeit a semi-paralytic, who had marched under the flag of the Emperor, was captivating. His description of the duel of Titans was neither thrilling nor coherent. It resolved itself into this: Napoleon had won the battle six times over, and the French had eventually lost it because they were betrayed.

"*Nous sommes trahis.*" How often was it

my lot afterwards to hear that wretched phrase of the baffled rabble, which had been an army, revivified and repeated to the pitch of nausea to account for more modern disasters.

"Ma freend," said the old Scotchman, who was bluntness personified, "if a Frenchman cut his finger with a fish-knife, he would swear he was betrayed. That venerable fool does not know what he is jabbering about. Napoleon wore a cocked-hat broadside on, and Wellington wore a cocked-hat fore-and-aft — that is the extent of his knowledge."

The Caledonian's contempt for the acquirements of his compatriots by naturalisation was sublime.

"They ken naething o' geography," he used to say, "they jist imagine the Piræus is a human creature; and as for leeterature, they think mair o' the caudal appendages o' Bo-peep's sheep than o' the lost tales o' Miletus. They're the Chinese

o' Europe, and tak' every mon wha isn't of their ain land for an outer barbarian."

The Irish members of our society, being hero-worshippers, would not give up their faith in the First Napoleon. We held a festive meeting in one of the horse-boxes, as we nicknamed the row of outlying rooms, and decreed that the great Emperor was a genius, and his nephew —well, a gentleman. Further, it was resolved that we should devote a day to visiting those sites in Paris which were hallowed by association with his career. I append the itinerary we adopted, for the benefit of those who may be inclined to make a pilgrimage of the kind, with the caution that the numbers of houses and names of streets may all be now altered out of recognition. The first care of Parisians, when they make a successful revolution, is to revolutionize the nomenclature. It necessitates the printing of new bill-heads and trade circulars, gives work to painters

and embarrasses hack-drivers and visitors. But, on the other hand, it helps visitors to realise that there has been a revolution.

The opening stage of our pious tramp brought us to the Military School. We had to be contented here with an outer survey of the building in which our idol spent some of his student days, but consoled ourselves with the moral reflection, that the *elève* Buonaparte (pronounced in four syllables) had to mount one hundred and seventy-three steps of stairs to his domicile. It was agreed that this proved that the hero was sound in the wind, but that our horse-boxes were more convenient, if not so high up in the world. Item, that the *elève* Buonaparte must have had the home feeling strong in him, since it is related that he traced a sketch of Ajaccio, his birthplace, on the walls of his chamber.

Thence we moved on to No. 5, Quai de Conti, nearly opposite the equestrian statue of the Vert-

Galant. When he emerged from the school of Brienne, a subaltern of artillery, the Man of the Age rented a garret in the fifth storey. At the time of our inspection it was occupied by a painter, the ground-floor was a bookseller's, and on either side were wine-shops.

The third stage of our pilgrimage was reached at the Hotel de Metz, in the Rue du Mail, room 14 in the third storey. Buonaparte—perhaps he had dropped the "u" from his name now—was creeping onward, but still he had to dine at a cheap eating house in the Rue des Petits-Pères. Item, cheap as the tariff was, he had to pawn his watch once to discharge his liabilities. This we regarded, somehow, as a link of sympathy with him — an unexpected feather in our individual caps.

Further on, at the Hotel of the Rights of Man, at the angle where the Rue Montmartre intersects, still advancing, with his brother Louis,

and Junot, Buonaparte had a suite of three rooms. The lodgers who were afterwards to be saluted Emperor of the French, King of Holland, and Duke of Abrantes, paid the clubbed rent of twenty-seven francs, say a guinea a month! Reflection upon this fact roused us to a cheer, which discomposed the mind of a *sergent de ville.*

At the fifth halting-point, Rue de la Michodière, where our idol had once resided, there was nothing to flatter our special pride or excite our admiration.

The sixth stage was the Hotel Mirabeau, in the Allée du Dauphin, commanding a view of the Tuileries. The future conqueror made a conquest here. The landlord's daughter, Fanchette, fell in love with him. Her father consented to their nuptials, provided Buonaparte would retire from the army and turn hotel-keeper! We groaned gruesomely, and startled another *sergent de ville.* Fan-

chette received in a street riot an iron ball in the leg, which crushed a bone, and the unfortunate lass had to suffer amputation. She recovered, fitter for a hospital ward than the marriage-bed, and the match was broken off. That iron ball lost Fanchette a limb, gained France a hero, and gave Cæsar a rival!

This by no means exhausted the shrines we had intended to visit, and the relics to examine. His bronze image as a general, with long hair, and eyes of inspiration, in the Louvre; his coronation robes at Notre Dame; the sword he carried at Austerlitz, close by the massive sarcophagus over his remains in the Invalides, had yet to be seen. But we postponed our journey, as the sleet began to pelt down with a quick, thick, swishing rush, as only Paris sleet can, and the hour for dinner was drawing nigh.

"What were you 'maniacs' up to the other day? You must be more careful. Do you know

you were dogged by a police-spy, who has been prying into your antecedents, occupations, and political sympathies?"

Such was the unexpected warning from a friendly Frenchman; and so stomached were we at the ungrateful return for our enthusiasm that we forthwith convened a meeting in one of the horse-boxes, unanimously decreed that the Empire was a fraud, and its founder an irascible, selfish, cruel, arrogant little Corsican usurper, who treated Josephine like a brute, and murdered the Duke d'Enghien, and finally wound up by singing the prohibited *Marseillaise* in a low key very much out of tune.

About this period, while the Waterloo fever was upon me, I took a trip to Brussels, mainly to follow out the episodes of the action upon the field itself. I lodged in a cheap eating-house in a narrow street behind the Hotel de Ville. I walked to Waterloo, a long trudge, ascended

that absurdly piled Lion Mound, surveyed the Château of Hougoumont, and scrupulously did *not* buy any of the genuine relics of the fight dug up on the previous day. The most interesting spot in the place is the museum of weapons, cuirasses, biscayens, buttons, and the like — authenticated those — kept by the daughter of Sergeant-Major Cotton, one of those who took part in the engagement. I denied myself the services of a guide, although I could not avoid overhearing the fluent gibberish of an impudent ruddy-cheeked tyke in blouse, who was conducting a party of English tourists. A judge of human nature this guide. When he is escorting Frenchmen, he is careful to point out where *we* were betrayed, and the glorious Emperor had to succumb to perfidy; with Britons, he is glowing in his panegyrics on the tactics of *our* Duke; and so accomplished in his vocation is he, that he accommodates his praises to his listeners, and

gives the credit of the victory to the Life Guards, the Scots Greys and Highlanders, or the Irish regiments, to suit the partialities of his clients. When Germans are with him, it is to be presumed Blücher is the hero of the day; and with his own countrymen naturally the palm of valour goes to the brave Belgians.

"Come now, honestly," said I to him over a glass of faro, "what do you think of Waterloo?"

"Well, sir," he answered, "we do not make half as much as we did some years ago. I honestly think we want another battle; this one is getting too stale!"

I stopped in Brussels longer than I had bargained for. A Dublin newspaper proprietor, who was in my debt, sent me the half of a ten-pound note and did not send me the companion half. Indeed he could not well do so, having transmitted it by the same post in acquit-

ment of a claim from a creditor in London. He had an excuse; he was a gentleman who lived by the trade of patriotism. Oh! the misery which that dishonourable act caused me as I waited week after week in the strange city, literally in pawn. I had given the valueless scrap of flimsy to the landlord, telling him it was not negotiable until the second half was attached to it and that I was expecting that by an early mail. He handed me a little pocket-money to go on with, but when it was exhausted and no letter turned up, I was penniless. I wrote a pressing letter (not prepaid) to another debtor in Dublin. The landlord grew more surly every day, and at the end he grudged me the food I ate and the bed I slept on. I verily believe he began to think I was a thievish person. I had one comfort, a copy of "The Sentimental Journey," and that I read over and over again, now on a bench in the

Botanical Gardens, now in the Park in front of the Palace, until I had almost learned it by rote. The frayed, dog-eared, paper-covered book is by me as I write, a memorial of a purgatorial season. The pathos of Sterne struck me more than his humour—I suppose I was not in the frame to appreciate humour—and I can trace on the fly-leaf a pencilled opinion that some of the passages are only to be equalled for their power of stirring tearful emotions by Shakespeare's account of the death of Falstaff, and the lament of Chantefleurie over the wooden shoe in Hugo's great architectural romance. I roamed over the space in front of the Hotel de Ville in the mornings until I had cultivated the intimacy of every dog who drew a cart to the market, and I paced at the base of the statues of Egmont and Hoorn of nights, and sometimes looked up at the sky and wished that it might rain cigars. The shopkeepers about there began

to look upon me as a harmless lunatic. But the landlord was getting from the surly to the sarcastic and insolent. I had a companion in misfortune, a burly Swiss doctor from Yverdon. We were put to sleep in one room for economy, and as punishment for our poverty. He had his grievance like the Waterloo guide. Europe was too healthy. If cholera would happily visit it his fortune would be made. He had devoted ten years to the study of the pestilence and had discovered an infallible remedy. And now the pestilence would not oblige by coming. Because the vile multitude had no fear of poison, he was to be deprived of meat.

That second half-note never reached Brussels, and I was only enabled to redeem my body from mortgage by a remittance from Dublin from one who believed in paying his debts. He was not a pseudo-patriot; and the delay in hearing from him was explained by his absence

on a holiday in the Highlands. When I got the money, the landlord fawned, Yverdon and I dined royally and drank success to Cholera Morbus within the limits of recovery. I incensed the statues of Egmont and Hoorn with tobacco-smoke, stood treat to the dogs in the market-place next morning, and hastened back to Paris.

I must not forget one cheap pleasure I enjoyed during my stay in Brussels. The French and Belgian veterans of Waterloo held their annual 5th of May junketing in commemoration of Napoleon in the very room underneath our sleeping-place. They ate well, although they had less than the regular supply of teeth, talked much and drank mightily.

The 5th of May is the anniversary of Napoleon's death, and on that date it was the custom at Paris for the survivors of the hosts he led, the *vieux de la vieille*, to march from the Hôtel des Invalides to hang votive flowers on the spikes of the

rails round the base of the column in the Place Vendôme. I was present at the last muster of the kind. It was a gloomy day, with a leaden sky which almost touched the earth. I took up my station beside the tall monument with its spiral girdings of bronze battle-plates from the basin in which captured Austrian cannon had been melted down. The statue of the Emperor on the summit of the memorial was not as it should be—not the sturdy figure with stooped shoulders and folded arms, in cocked hat and chasseur uniform, but a burlesque, bare-headed Cæsar, with laurelled brow and orb in extended hand. There was no gathering to witness the celebration. Beyond the sentinel of the Municipal Guard, the custodian of the column, some casual passers-by, a group of street urchins, and myself, there was not a mortal in the square. Who can say that there were not immortals in thousands hovering round? Anon came the

feeble rattle of a drum in the distance, and presently appeared round the corner, in the direction of the Place de la Concorde, a small body of hobbling, decrepit veterans in quaint, old-fashioned garb. As they caught sight of the tall monument, the drum-taps rose louder, bent forms were straightened, and the steps of these antiquated warriors fell on the asphalte with a firmer precision. There was one drummer, one officer with drawn sword, and some five-and-twenty in the ranks—all that remained of the thundering legions which had tramped over Europe in the arrogant majesty of their strength.

Among those thin-shanked, wizened gray-beards, with scant breath and heavy eyes, there must have been men of Waterloo, of the Peninsula, of Borodino; there can hardly have been any of Jena, of Austerlitz, of the Pyramids, or of the superb campaign of Italy. At that

interval of time a few years make themselves notably felt. How singularly they were dressed, some with long, fantastic plumes drooping from their shakos, some in lancers' schapskas, and some in the projecting bearskins of the grenadiers of the Old Guard; there were furred coats and braided coats, coats of every cut and colour; hussar tights with faded pipings on the seams, the obsolete high leggings of the infantry, and one or two jackboots, I almost think, for on that occasion the clothes of the in-pensioner were put away and the threadbare, ancient uniform resumed. On they came at a slow, shuffling gait, pitiful in its effort to be martial, the officer making his best imitation of a swagger, the drummer hammering on the brown parchment with increasing energy as he neared his goal. They arrived at the foot of the column, halted, formed into line, saluted as the drummer beat a strident roll, and then the officer advanced

and reverentially strung an enormous wreath of *immortelles* round one of the railings. Turning, he lifted his sword, kissed its hilt, and gave the word "*Vive l'Empereur!*"

There was an attempt to bend back the curvature of senility; the radiance of excitement —the ghost of a flush—flitted across the leathery cheeks; there was a spark of fire in the heavy eyes, and an answering volume of faint, squeaky repetitions of the cry quavered on the air, and then broke out a painful interruption of coughs. A roar of jeers burst from the group of street urchins, who had surveyed the whole scene in the true iconoclastic mood, with their hands in their breeches' pockets, and a grin on their saucy faces.

"*Vive l'Empereur!*" again cried a veteran on the flank, moving towards the boys with threatening crutch.

The group burst into a louder crow of irony

while one, bolder than the rest, yelled "turnips," and "Hast thou seen my sister?"—catch phrases of the gutter.

"Silence, mustard!" muttered the indignant veteran, "do you not know that when we cry '*Vive l'Empereur*!' we mean the emperor who is dead?"

The skeleton array got permission to "dismiss," and the survivors of the Grand Army dispersed to the nearest wine-shops, where, no doubt, they grew vain and fought their battles o'er again and waxed maudlin and wept over the decadence of the age.

The function would have been grotesque, were it not so pathetic. It conveyed one portentous moral: the cult for the Napoleonic legend was dying out.

The weather cleared up in the afternoon, and a bright moon illuminated the Boulevard St. Michel that night. Well do I remember prome-

nading the pavements and sitting on a bench in the small hours, listening with others to the cheery conversation of a great painter, athletic and middle-aged, portly of frame, with beard of Neptune, and the open laugh and hearty voice of the men of the plenteous province of the good red wine. He managed to speak without letting the ruddy embers in the big bowl of his porcelain pipe go out, and we hearkened to him with respect, for he was the founder of a school, a less coarse Zola of the brush—Gustave Courbet. A twelvemonth later the column in the Place Vendôme was doomed to destruction by the voice of the Burgundian painter as an odious tribute to the lust of conquest and an outrage on the gentle spirit of true democratic peace and goodwill towards the nations.

CHAPTER IV.

Edmond O'Donovan: His Varied Accomplishments and Chequered Career—A Linguist by Race—An Ingenious Advertising Agent—The Eccentric Professor Mortimer—The *Crêmerie Revert*—Polish Exiles—Proud Poverty—A Limping Hero—Converse in Cherkess and Crayon—Anecdote of Alexandre Dumas—The Irish "Worthy to be French!"—James Stephens, the Fenian: His Characteristics—Conventional Virtue—Mortimer charms a Corsican.

Our Irish colony was strengthened about this period by the arrival of a sprightly young fellow, who has since annexed a niche in history, Edmond O'Donovan. He took up his lodgings in the room next mine, and there began a friendship which was only severed by his death. He was an ardent partisan of what are known as extreme Irish national politics, and had it forced upon him

that it was more convenient to live out of British territory than within it. To Paris he came partly because his brother, William, was there before him, and partly because of the facilities it afforded for self-education. Nick Walsh being his old friend and fellow-townsman, he naturally gravitated towards our *Pension*. A gay but purposeful stripling he was, well read, quick of perception, and brimming with virility. What a springy step he had, and what a peculiarly earnest emphatic voice as he delivered his views on what he had seen in language vivid and well chosen, broken by frequent short pauses. There was a wild glare in his eyes now and then, as he worked himself to animation, and he was ready of gesture as a Neapolitan. His marked attainments were not of the ordinary University calibre, although he had had an honourable University record to his credit in "the silent sister." He was not given to embroidering his

discourse with quotations from the classics. I may almost venture to say that he cared more for Mangan and Davis than for Juvenal or Ovid; anyhow he was fond of singing "Clare's Dragoons" and kindred lyrics, and the bent of his mind evidently lay more towards logistique than logic, the use of arms than the use of the globes. In chemistry and military engineering he was an adept, and bought or borrowed all the treatises he could find on the subjects; he had a fair acquaintance with heraldry, and more than a smattering of medicine; could sketch, shoot, lecture, botanize, quote Milton, handle conic sections, sleep on a table, and was master of minor accomplishments too numerous for my memory to retain. He had been assistant librarian in a renowned college, had carried a banner at the installation into a knightly order of a son of the Queen, had made careful studies of Irish prison life, and was familiar with mid-Atlantic breezes.

The O'Donovans come originally from Clare; but Edmond was born in the North Strand of Dublin city; the date, I believe, was September 13th, 1848. The father of the Merv Triumvir that was to be was an LL.D., held the Gaelic chair in Trinity College, translated "The Annals of the Four Masters," and enjoyed for many years a pension from the Civil List in reward for his literary services.

The study of Arabic was Edmond's passion while in the Rue des Fossés St. Victor. He used to absolutely take the grammar to bed with him, read himself to sleep poring over its pages, and re-open it when he turned on his pillow in the morning. This strenuous application stood him in good stead in after years. The gift of concentrativeness—to employ a long word—was inherited from his father, and was common to the family. William O'Donovan was a remarkable instance in proof. He had never been to

Germany, and yet he mastered the language so that he could speak and write it with purity and fluency, and pass for a German among Germans, simply by close and patient attention to books, and by cultivating the society of the sons of the Fatherland settled in Paris. I wrote "mastered" advisedly, for he knew German not as the waiter or dragoman knows it in its colloquialisms, but as the scholar familiar with the beauties of Goethe and Schiller, and competent to appreciate them. He was a linguist by race, and earned a competence by concocting a spicy epitome of Paris gossip every week for a number of South American papers. To qualify for the post he had to teach himself Spanish.

It may be amusing as showing how things are worked in Paris—that hot-bed of ingenuity—to explain the method O'Donovan's employer adopted to interest the editors of Brazil and adjoining countries in the tittle-tattle of the

French capital. He was an advertising agent, and undertook to supply them with his weekly budget of news in exchange for a column of their space. They were only too glad to accede to his terms. This column he filled with a stereotyped block of notices of patent medicines, Syracusan balms for the complexion, infallible preventives for the ague, and luxuriant hair stimulant patronised by all the crowned heads of Europe. The quacks paid him regularly as soon as they were presented with a file of the papers wherein, by the far-spreading influence of his cosmopolitan bureau and the outlay of his money, he had secured them such excellent positions for their advertisements. Buisson was the name of this wide-awake dealer in puffery: the name deserves to be immortalised.

"Ha! Buisson," Willie was wont to chuckle, "he is no *buisson creux*. I verily believe if he were cast on a desolate island on Monday, he

would be bossing a prosperous grocery store there by Saturday!"

But *the* linguist of my acquaintance was my friend and countryman, Professor Mortimer, who spoke thirteen languages, more or less, and made all melodious with an irrepressible Cork brogue. He was a peripatetic dictionary of dates, and saved me many a weary journey to the Imperial library to verify a quotation which a treacherous memory failed to supply at the right moment. What an outlandish career had his been! Somebody has said that if any man's life, as it really passed, were truthfully written, it would exceed in interest any romance; it would be riper in lessons of sage experience than Bacon, Locke, or Franklin. If the ordinary man's life would be that, what would not Mortimer's have been? In his turn he had been ship-carpenter and hotel-tout, champion vaulter in an Austrian circus and professor of Hebrew in a Hamburg college; he

made the tour of France as secretary to Murphy, the Irish giant, the tour of Germany as lecturer on William Shakespeare. He had been the proprietor of a company of Spanish ballet-dancers, the boon companion of Sir William Don at Baden-Baden, paragraphist on the *Indépendance Belge* at Brussels, and tutor to Charles Lever's children at Florence.

A little man with grizzly brush-like beard, spectacles always on nose, a white hat on his head, a pipe in his mouth, which pipe he removed every two minutes to go through the motions of spitting—a dry sort of spit, like his laugh, which was dry, too, and his conversation, which was underlain by a dry vein of satire. He hated kings, did Professor Mortimer, considered the execution of Maximilian in Mexico the greatest triumph the people had in this century, averred himself an Orangeman, yet was the most tolerant being in matters of religion I ever met; was

the most vitriolic of Reds in his language, most beneficent of Providences in his acts—an amiable type, whose mildness of temperament and goodness of disposition, no vizor, however so grimly painted, could disguise into ferocity.

In the heart of that rare old street of the School of Medicine, down past Blancard's (who has not heard of Blancard?—Puff is Allah and Blancard, *marchand d'habits*, his Prophet), away beyond those wonderful shops with grinning skulls, plaster-casts of the heads of notorious murderers, and exquisite prints of most interesting developments of cutaneous disease, in the window; on by the surgical instrument maker's and medical bookseller's, was the temple where the Professor sat enthroned, the *Crêmerie Revert.* A *crêmerie* is a cross between a café and a wineshop, where you can enjoy your *demi-tasse* cheaper than in the one and quaff your tumbler of Bordeaux without the suspicion of intemperance attaching to the *habitués*

of the other. It is in the *crêmeries*, conspicuous in their brightly-painted fronts, the working population of Paris eats its cheap breakfasts and dinners—at best a meagre vegetarian sort of diet. I have a card of the *Crêmerie Revert* before me, and it sets forth that the establishment is renowned for its *déjeûners*, and supplies its customers with cups of coffee at fifteen centimes and twenty. Bowls of chocolate and of rice, and vessels of hot or cold milk enter largely into the composition of the rations served out in these establishments, and the milk, if not altogether rich and pure as the stream Molly draws from the ripe udders of the brindled cow, is of a much better quality than that supplied from the animal with the iron tail. The liberty of adulteration is one of those liberties tyrannously held under repression in France.

As we entered, we found a long, low room

with a central passage leading to the kitchen at the rear and at either side little marble tables with rows of seats for the motley *clientèle;* and what a motley *clientèle* was there! Frenchmen of every class, from the workman in his blue blouse to the poor officer, and exiles of every nation, speaking in a Babel confusion of languages. But if one listened it was easy to note that the guttural accents of a Slavish tongue were most frequent. That was because the house was a resort of Polish exiles of both emigrations (that after the insurrection of 1831 and the last) and was even said to have been the place of meeting of the first Polish convention in Paris.

An aristocratic *crêmerie* was the *Crêmerie Revert.* That little gentleman opposite, with the bullet-head and eyes and Calmuck type of face, was the Baron Samwhiski. He had been in the diplomatic service, as representative of the Polish Provisional Government to the courts and alleys

of Constantinople, during the insurrection. He was a doctor of laws of the University of Wilna, and was very proud, the Baron, although he *was* dependent on his wits for his ways and means. He was working for a benevolent Israelite some time before I knew him, engrossing or doing some law-clerk labour of the kind, and his employer happened to put a packet into his hand, and asked him to take it to a customer's in the next street. The blue blood of the Baron bubbled in his veins like a geyser.

"Dog of a Jew!" he cried, striking an attitude, "do you dare to ask *me* to carry a parcel, ME, a noble of the Polish kingdom!"

Poor little Baron, he had all the *hauteur* of an ancient line, and sat with as much dignity over his small *bifteck* as if it were a feast of Epicurus. How often he had slipped over to me and asked me, in an undertone, could I give him enough tobacco to make a cigarette. Per-

haps he had been sitting for hours among his smoking conntrymen, but his pride would not allow him to crave even that favour. I think the Baron was a fool for his pride. He was coldly polite to an exile, who was a mere *roturier,* but how cordially he ran to embrace his brother noble in distress, the Count Pollbloski. (The names of all the noble gentlemen ended in *ski,* and, as a rule, the preceding syllable was a sneeze). Pollbloski's paternal domains consisted of several castles in Spain, and his fixed income of the allowance he received monthly from the Administration, for these exiles were entitled to assistance from the French Government. Samwhiski had been at great pains to impress upon me that this subvention was not a gift, but the repayment of a loan given by Poland to France during the wars of Napoleon. Ex-privates of the army of revolution received ten francs a month; ex-captains, twenty-five;

wounded men, the same; and those who were anxious to take out one of the learned professions were allowed thirty-five francs a month and had the privilege of free lectures.

I knew a Pole, Alfred de Gryesicki, who broke from his medical course at the University of Vienna, to join the forces of Langiewicz, in 1863, fought in the patriot's cavalry to the close, and was continuing his studies at the faculty of Paris. I often met him limping out of the hospital of the Clinique, on his pair of high crutches, for poor de Gryesicki had his right leg blown off from the hip in his thirty-fifth engagement. As the handsome youth, defiant even in his mutilation, passed by, many a hat was doffed respectfully to him by the bystanders, who recognised in him a type of his afflicted, but proud nation.

Nearly every one of the Poles to be encountered in the *crêmerie* had served with distinction in the insurrection. That wild-looking fellow in

the bluish-gray military mantle had seventeen wounds on various parts of his body. If you observed his hand, when he stretched it for his cup of coffee, two of the fingers were wanting. The old man with that splendid Vandyke head, with whom he spoke, had been a wealthy merchant in Cracow. Now he was a penniless outcast, lone in his age, a stranger in a strange land. He gave of his earthly goods to purchase arms to free Poland; and when the failure came his money-boxes were emptied into the laps of his unhappy brethren. It was pitiable to see that old man, when he ought to have been the centre of a joyous family-circle, stalking solitary up and down in that dingy hostelry. He made no friends; his one pleasure was to sit to a game of chess with a rival, an Irish refugee: his one item of expenditure, the *petit noir*, he humbly asked of "Monsieur Jean," the waiter. Two sous were all that went to the establishment from his

slender purse, the night long. There is unacknowledged heroism squandering itself thus in the by-ways and out-of-the-way corners of the world which would bear comparison, and come best out of the trial, with that which attitudinizes in the lime-light glare of success. That old Cracow merchant was a nobler figure in my eyes than the Napoleon of the Place Vendôme.

Mortimer was a most useful man in this extraordinary caravanserai. He was at the service of every poor wanderer who could not make his wishes known in broken French. I have absolutely seen him talking in the Cherkess language or dialect, to a big ruffianly-looking savage, with a face in which all that was not pirate was brigand. An escaped felon from Toulon I should have taken him for, were it not for his loose frogged robe of wool, with an arrangement suspiciously like one of cartridge tubes slung across in front. It was the orthodox

costume of Circassia, and Mortimer having noticed the hapless barbarian's futile endeavours to make himself understood, took pity upon him, and went to the trouble of picking up a selection from the Cherkess vocabulary for his especial benefit.

The rude mountaineer had not the same resource to fall back upon as our great Irish painter. They were fond of telling a story of Nick Walsh, which I cannot conscientiously believe to be based on fact. He wanted a few boiled eggs in the *crêmerie*, but could not for the life of him recollect the French for eggs. In his difficulty, he drew out a note-book, and sketched a couple of them on a leaf. The waiter nodded, smiled, said "*oui, oui*," and rushed off to re-appear with a plate of apples! The man who, as I now think, was the inventor of the story, used to soften it by the remark: "You know, old fellow, if you had only the chance of putting a little colour into your sketch, that

would never have occurred; but, as a draughtsman, I'm afraid you are no Apelles."

There were a number of hotels in the vicinity, which were under the surveillance of the police. Political exiles allowed to re-enter France on urgent private affairs were obliged to locate themselves in these hotels. Amongst those exiles, in the quarter for a fortnight or so, was a brother of the Orsini, who had been guillotined for the attempt on the life of Napoleon III. in 1858. William O'Donovan knew him and once paid a visit in his company to Dumas. Orsini was anxious to interest him on behalf of some fund for the relief of Italians impoverished by the part they had taken in the struggles for national independence; O'Donovan was glad to embrace the opportunity of having a peep at the great romancer under his own roof-tree. They were received cordially, Orsini being among the friends of Dumas. Everything was charmingly

free and easy. The burly magician of the pen was sitting in his shirt-sleeves opposite a wide fireplace with crackling logs on the andirons. One fair lady in a dressing-gown reclined in an easy-chair, with her legs supported on another and smoked a Russian cigarette. A second leant over the grand old man, and toyed with his frizzled locks. The latter quietly left the room as the visitors entered. The occupant of the arm-chair never took the slightest notice of their presence, but calmly continued blowing cloudlets.

"Is Madame in the way?" queried Dumas.

"Not at all," answered Orsini, courteously, "on the contrary, as I am on an errand of charity, I am the more pleased to have her here, for her woman's heart is sure to aid me."

Madame inclined her head slightly, and the Italian proceeded to expound his mission.

"Command me," said Dumas heartily, when he had heard him out. "I shall do all I can

for you, but meantime you will want something for present necessities. Take whatever the gods send you on the mantelpiece."

"There are only five francs and a few sous here, master!" said Orsini, ruefully.

Dumas laughed a joyous laugh, full of the spirit of schoolboy mischief.

"I am hardly surprised," he said, looking at the lady, "money takes wings to itself and flies away; but if it were five hundred or fifteen hundred instead of five francs, you know, Orsini, you are welcome to it. But my young friend here, he is not Italian?"

"No, sire," said O'Donovan, "I am from Ireland."

"Ireland, ah! I recollect, *la verte Erinn*, the land of castles and giants and mountains, and the men who wear petticoats, on the borders of England, is it not? But you speak French well?"

"We are not all uncivilized there, master, and I am proud to meet you and to tell you how much you are prized in my country. It is years since I made the acquaintance of one of your family there. I became very intimate with him, and I am indebted to him for many hours of delightful enjoyment."

"One of my family! This is astonishing. I never heard of any of them who went to Ireland. There must be some mistake."

"No mistake, I assure you. He is well known there, and a great favourite."

"You have set my curiosity on fire. Name him, pray?"

"The Count of Monte-Cristo!'

The prince of novelists bounded off his seat, caught O'Donovan in his arms, hugged him to his broad breast, and kissed him on both cheeks. Then holding him back from him, he looked at him with eyes blazing with triumph and gladness,

and exclaimed, "You are right, my child; the Irish are not uncivilized, they have *esprit;* they are worthy to be French. I was never paid a higher compliment in my life."

About this time a man appeared in the Latin Land (to which the political outcasts of the world seemed to trend), who was really much "wanted" in England. So anxiously was his presence there desired, that a large reward was offered to anybody who would prevail on him to put himself within the grasp of a police-officer in British territory. One thousand pounds, I think, was the price set upon his head. This was James Stephens, the original Fenian Head-Centre, who had escaped from a Dublin prison most unaccountably. I have heard several versions of the manner in which the feat was accomplished; but, as these contradict each other, I am reluctant to give any, lest I might be inducing the curious in such things into error. It is certain, how-

ever, that the flight of the considerable conspirator, who was the indirect means of bringing about the abolition of the Irish Church Establishment, according to Mr. Gladstone, was effected very dexterously. There was none of the hairbreadth and breakneck crudity of Benvenuto Cellini's enlargement from St. Angelo's Castle. Possibly he flew over the walls in an aerial machine, but I do not bind myself to the supposition. Anyhow, when all England was ringing with the tidings of his self-ordained jail-delivery, and the keenest runners of the Lower Castle Yard of Dublin and Scotland Yard were jostling each other in the chase after him, driving puzzled commercial travellers in remote hotels into insanity, and scanning every outward-bound passenger at every port to America and the Continent, he was quietly taking his ease in a hotel not a quarter of a mile from Buckingham Palace, yawning over the *Times*, and recommend-

ing the servitors to be more attentive to the polish of his boots. It was reported of him that, on clearing the barriers of his place of captivity, he turned round at parting and said: "There is another sell for the British Government!"

Mortimer, who had known him on a previous visit to Paris after the failure of Smith O'Brien's puny attempt at insurrection, pointed him out to me on the Boulevard St. Michel one day. A deep-chested, compactly-built man, middle-aged and somewhat under the middle size, with dome-like forehead, sharp red-rimmed eyes, flowing straw-coloured hair and beard, and small aristocratic white hands, he looked more like a German theorist than a plotter of plots. He wore a soft slouch hat and a seedy gray Inverness cape. He spent most of his time cheapening books on the quays. The man who was accused of having made so much money out of credulous Pat and Biddy, was in a state not of comparative

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but of positive poverty—almost penury. Life under such circumstances was not new to him; he had journeyed on foot all over Ireland disguised as a beggarman, sleeping on trusses of straw, and content with the plainest of fare—most frequently a small loaf of coarse bread and a pint of porter per diem. Yet Stephens was naturally of luxurious habits and refined delicate tastes. He had immense faith in himself, a dogged patience, great secretiveness and power of organisation and a wondrous gift of winning over young men, ay, and old likewise, to his person. His knowledge of French was accurate and extensive; indeed, he had supported himself once by turning "David Copperfield" and others of Dickens's works into that tongue; he was well acquainted with its literature, and a great admirer of Montesquieu. Among English authors Carlyle was one of his favourites. Mortimer showed me a Tauchnitz edition of "The French

Revolution" with annotations from his hand on every page.

It will further surprise those who took their cue from *Punch* and pictured this Irish rebel to themselves as an unkempt, gorilla-jowled Yahoo, to be told that he was self-contained and dignified in bearing, spoke with a low, slow, musical voice, could dress a salad, play chess, and was passionately fond of flowers. I am afraid there is too much of a tendency among Englishmen—may I not say among the less observant classes in all countries?—to take it for granted that those who are opposed to them in politics, or party or creed are ignorant, vicious, or good-for-nothing. There are fine fellows of every politics, party, and creed. Nobody is utterly bad and contemptible, to my mind, but the mean avaricious sneak who plays the toady to serve his own purposes. Stephens was not that. The bloodthirsty man has usually some

redeeming quality—not that Stephens was blood-thirsty; he was the other thing—and if once you discover what that quality is, beware, or you may get attached to him. Everybody (with the very very few exceptions which are needful to establish the rule) has some element of noble, above-cloud attributes in him. That is my experience, and I have known brigands, Communists, professional soldiers, professional gamblers, burglars, and prize-fighters. Put the smug tradesman, who never risks his skin, but who carries on his systematic chicanery with fair face, goes to church while he robs his neighbour, violates the spirit of equity without transgressing the letter of law—put him in the scale with the late Charles Peace and he will be wanting. I know such tradesmen; seriously, I consider there is more honour and certainly more manliness among the burglars. My experiences I grant may have been singular;

but I have met out-at-elbows Bohemians more lovable and richer in moral beauties than many preachers of the Gospel, peasants who were nobler and truer than princes, Jews and Mahomedans who were more faithful to their plighted word than so-called Christians.

Those who read these "Leaves," therefore, in the belief that I am solicitous to chime in with received opinions, to stroke the animal's hide with the grain, accept everything which it is the fashion to cherish, and denounce everything which it is the custom to speak ill of, are nursing a delusion. They had better close the volume and send it back to the circulating library. If they *will* read and have prejudices—I warn them to prepare to have those prejudices occasionally shocked. Conventional virtue and the writer are not allies.

One day Mortimer called me mysteriously into a corner, and whispered, "If you or any of the

boys ever get into a scrape here—such accidents will happen in the best regulated families—come to me and I will help you out of it. I have more influence than you imagine."

My features must have betrayed my astonishment.

"No, it is not the influence of money—I have not dug up a nugget—but it is something which money cannot buy. Listen, the chief of a department of the *mouchards*, the political spies of the Empire, is my admirer, and is burning to do me a service."

I thought the Professor had a mosquito in his salt-box, as the French phrase it.

"He is a Corsican—they are all Corsicans—and I said the other night in his hearing—mind, I said it intentionally, for I am very deep—that I could not understand any native of Corsica being ill-affected to the Imperial dynasty. With them fidelity to the Empire should be a matter of family

duty. Corsicans should love the Bonapartes, for it was a Bonaparte who made that islet in the Mediterranean the most famous in the world, and the undying glory of the First Napoléon was reflected on every individual Corsican for all time. He moved towards me, seized my hand, and said I was made after his own heart; was the most sensible man he had ever met, and that I had grasped the situation in a sentence. Whenever it lay in his power to befriend me or mine, I had but to call on him. You see," continued Mortimer, chuckling, "I had supplied the blackguard with an excuse for his dirty trade."

"But how do you know he belonged to the secret police?"

"You must not ask too many questions," replied Mortimer, sententiously.

A day came when we had need for the promised aid, and when it was loyally rendered;

but the account of that accident in our well-regulated family must be reserved for a later chapter in these veracious but disconnected memoirs.

The Professor had made a friend of the Mammon of Iniquity, and when the critical moment came we were glad to accept a lift from the Mammon's arm—as most loftily-independent persons in straits usually are.

CHAPTER V.

The Writer is employed as a Machine—Pomposo, the Despot—A Literary Factory—Anecdotes of "Father Prout"—Thackeray in Paris—The Paris Correspondents of the London Dailies: Messrs. Meagher, Whitehurst, Browne, Bowyer, Bingham, Bowes, Crawford, and Merrick—How to tickle John Bull—Anonymous Journalism—Sham Literary Men—The Writer waxes Wrathful.

An advertisement appeared one day in a paper printed in English, in Paris—a paper Byron and Thackeray honoured by mention—seeking for a gentleman of University education who was qualified to contribute original articles on French subjects and write dramatic criticisms on French plays. I sent in an application, and told Captain Bingham, who called over the same evening, what I had done. He smiled, and said:

"You'll suit them, no doubt, but they will never suit you. Half the English writers in Paris have had a sickening of that factory. The vacancy is on their own staff."

I received an answer to my letter by return of post, praying me to call at the house of the editor. He mentioned his terms, which suited me; and then he kindly held forth the promise that remuneration would rise, and that certain other advantages would follow, such as that of obtaining work elsewhere. For instance, a weekly letter for the *Observer*, of London, went with the office. That statement I subsequently discovered to be,—putting things mildly — disingenuous. But the whole advertisement was framed on the same lines. They wanted, not a dramatic critic, but a translator who could turn French news into readable condensed form for publication. The editor—I shall call him Pomposo, as he is dead, in charity to his rela-

tives—was one of the most arbitrary and overbearing individuals I ever had the misfortune to come across. To test my abilities, he asked me to write an imaginary criticism of a fictitious performance of a play of Racine, at the Théâtre Français. I did it to oblige and to gratify my own humour, and I was forthwith accepted. I found that my duties were far more laborious than I had been led to believe, and were made insufferably irksome by the continuous interference of this aged incubus.

Punctual, as if I were an operative in Woolwich Arsenal, I had to present myself for work every morning. Business was carried out on a peculiar plan in this literary factory. The editorial offices were on the first floor. Pomposo, a handsome fleshy man, of fine appearance, stood in front of a desk in one corner of a room, from which he could survey the movements of his colleagues. These were three and sometimes

four, and were seated at tables, mute as mice. The editor — bless the mark! — was of uneven temper; sometimes he was as splenetic as a sick rattlesnake, and sometimes, when his digestion was good, or he had secured a bargain at the Hôtel des Ventes the previous afternoon, he assumed a bearish affability. There was an English reading-room on the ground-floor, and the Paris morning papers were brought up from it before the subscribers arrived, that Pomposo might mark the articles to be copied. These were not cut out, that would be too wasteful; pins were simply stuck into them, diagonally if they were to be abbreviated, perpendicularly if they were to be given in full. After we had done with them, they were sent over to the reading-room. If Pomposo went out for a moment, the tongues of the unfortunate slave-driven employés were loosened. It was exactly as if a dreaded pedagogue had left a schoolroom;

the cat was away, the mice began to play. I felt mean, but I put up with it, for which I deserved small praise, seeing that I was there of my own will and to suit my own objects, and was not dependent for support on the situation. After the first edition of the paper was "put to bed," my colleagues, Pomposo, and I, left for a late breakfast. I had to return at half-past one to write a money article on the fluctuations of the Bourse—of which I knew nothing, and professed to know nothing then, and know less, if possible, now—and to turn a thermometrical report from Réaumur into Fahrenheit. Then I was at liberty for a few hours, when I had to call on Pomposo at his own apartment to worry at more translation, and carefully block out at his dictation the programme for the following day. I have never been on the treadmill; but, from a comparison of experiences with those who have, this, I should imagine, was a less mild form of

punishment. The only half-hour of pleasure I had in the dull round of responsible labour, punctuated with incessant nagging, was when Fabre, the messenger with the quotations from the Bourse, arrived. He had been a *prévôt d'armes* in a cavalry regiment, and as soon as I had finished my comments on the state of the money market, we slipped off our shoes, unpacked two single-sticks from a cupboard, and went silently at each other with a vengeance for half-an-hour. I stood the torture of the ordeal of brain and body for two months, and then I left, forfeiting a month's salary in lieu of notice. My successor, Mr. Davin, a barrister, stood it but three weeks, and his successor, Mr. P——, a son of an M.F.H., was irritated so sorely before he quitted that he threatened to throw Pomposo out of the window. Had Pomposo been twenty years younger, I do not think Mr. P—— would have been so ready with that threat.

I am loath to quit this sour old man without a few sentences on his behalf. His failings might have been attributed partly to his training and partly to his manner of life. In his youth, with Mr. Meagher of the *Times,* and a doctor who got into good practice at Paris and was knighted, he had been an usher in a school in Cork. If Pomposo had been brought up in an English public school, where he would have had his shins occasionally barked in a football match, he might have grown to be more manly, and more considerate to those in his power. In addition, it is my opinion the old fellow was dyspeptic, owing to his sedentary habits. But he was honest to the verge of brutality, and he had a supreme respect for the classics, although I doubt very much his ability to squeeze out of them their full sap. He was fond of showing a pocket *Iliad* which had been presented him by "Father Prout." The name in the fly-leaf was written

"Rev. Francis Mahony," the wit being particular to lay stress on the clerical prefix. Unamiable as he was, Pomposo was keenly alive to that foible in others.

"Cranky fellow, Mahony," he used to say; "if you asked him to write a favourable line of anybody, he'd be as likely as not to write ten against him."

Mr. Hely Bowes, son to the gentleman who made *Galignani's Messenger* — having been the first genuine editor, I believe — gave me some anecdotes of Prout which were eagerly listened to, for I had formed a very warm estimate of the eccentric Paris correspondent of the *Globe*. I had heard of his having taken down the muttered materials of an inspired leading article from Palmerston in a top room of the office of the London daily, and having dressed it up in his inimitable way, so that its own father would not recognise it. This article and many others

like it, shadowed forth by the Minister as he paced to and fro, came upon the community as the independent expression of public opinion—the public opinion to which the same Minister felt himself subsequently compelled to bow. There are tricks elsewhere than in the cabinet of the prestidigitateur. I had a deference for Mahony from what I had been told of his courageous discharge of his duties as a priest, during the prevalence of an epidemic in St. Giles's, and I had an admiration for him because of his sprightly, scholarly, daintily-lettered style. When he died, a gentleman, whose name I choose to forget, had the hardihood to think he could replace and reproduce him. He stepped into his shoes but did not fill them. What a lamentable misfit! Mahony's writing had the fresh scent of learned allusion, spontaneously springing from the text. This gentleman's smelt offensively of the concordance. The crabbed poetaster-con-

vivialist, who had worked his arms in mental obscurity into a *soutane* measured for somebody else, had a happy knack of turning Latin verse, and sometimes came to the aid of the boy Bowes, much to the perplexity of the Dominies who looked next morning over the composition. Another *littérateur* whom Mr. Bowes knew (how I envied him the knowledge!) was Thackeray. He had been a constant caller-in at the house of the elder Bowes, when he was over in Paris studying art—much, I fear, as I studied medicine. So much a friend of the family was he, that there was always a napkin laid for him. He ate or not, as he fancied; but he usually sat at a table apart, and, drawing over any scraps of waste paper which were near, he industriously, but unconsciously, covered them with pen-and-ink sketches, mostly tending towards caricature.

Thackeray had an originality and a touch as a draughtsman, but he was stiff, and his genius

disclosed itself in spite of him; it was the genius of idea struggling against the clumsiness of manipulation—a well-intentioned babe in tight swaddling-clothes. Luckily for the world, he got no encouragement in pursuing the road of art, although he was always anxious to travel it. Luckily, I repeat, for he could never have been able to call us up such visions in linear perspective as he did with the up-and-down strokes of his goose-quill. He was a ponderous man, and my friend Bowes used to relate with a pardonable sense of enjoyment, how the large, young artist came in one evening, and literally dropped into a chair. He had sat on one of those pretty cane-bottomed conveniences so common in English households, and he crashed through it, coming full bump on his nether part and sending the wreck in splintered spokes around him, to the wilful joy of young Bowes. At the *Pension*, I came across an album belonging to Count Roger de Beauvoir, which

contained some commonplace, but characteristic, water-colours of Thackeray. I wrote a letter about them to the *Times,* which brought Mr. S. C. Hall to inspect them in the interest of a publisher. He thought them nice, very nice, and said he would be happy to do what he could for me in London. As he left, it flashed upon me that he had meant to patronise me. Dear old gentleman, good-natured as ever!

The leading London papers were admirably served by their Paris agents at that era. The reckless competition for the earliest intelligence had not yet set in; the pen of the ready writer was not handicapped by that pestilent wire, which is utterly destructive of style and too often lends itself to inaccuracy. It was a pleasure to read the communications that were then mailed to England daily; they were scholarly or graceful, piquant or graphic, or all four combined. Mr. Meagher, who had previously acted in the same

capacity in Madrid, was the *Times'* correspondent, a gentleman of long experience, of culture and of steady judgment. The most popular letters, undoubtedly, were those of Mr. Felix Whitehurst of the *Telegraph*, although severe censors might object to their excessive vivacity. They were evidently written *currente calamo*, in a breezy, slapdash, steeplechase fashion that almost carried one's breath away; but they had this allurement—if they did not give much serious insight into what was passing, they were prodigal of amusement. Like "Manhattan's" lucubrations in the *Morning Herald* during the American Civil War, they were a feature in the sheet where they appeared. The Fat Boy might have been defied to yawn over them. Poor Whitehurst (he died prematurely) could not help being lively; he was a man with a boy's heart, knew every move on the boards, was intimate with all the ins and outs of Imperial Paris, and had a happy knack of freshening up a

cobwebby anecdote, and of imparting to the idle babble of the ante-room all the moment of a state secret. He put too much Cayenne pepper into his literary pabulum for some tastes; but the fact remains—the food was greedily devoured. One charm he possessed in perfection, that of tickling the average British intellect into a complacent sense of its own importance. Mr. Vestryman Bull took up the paper in the back parlour of his favourite tavern—it didn't matter if the sloppy ring of the bottom of a pewter-pot were smudged upon it—and as he read, his spirit was warmed with the glow of a supreme satisfaction. He felt socially elevated; he was almost the equal of dukes —that is, of foreign dukes; he was behind the scenes at palaces, clubs, and theatres; he knew exactly how much was paid for Mademoiselle Trois-Etoile's high-steppers and who paid it, and could give a shrewd guess as to the origin of the affair of honour between little X—— and the Vicomte

Barbiche. In short he was led unconsciously to smear himself with the unguent of flattery, and therein lay the spell which these letters cast over the public for so long. Mr. Whitehurst was a staunch Imperialist, and a favourite with Napoleon III., who made him a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour. Some Englishmen in Paris considered it excessively bad form in a British subject to have accepted this decoration. Circumstances alter cases. I have seen a scrap of red ribbon peeping from the button-hole of at least one of these self-same cavillers since.

The *Morning Post* was represented by Mr. Browne, a gentleman of musical and artistic tastes, who had a touch of extreme delicacy, when he chose, and could approach the most risky of subjects in a manner so artfully artless in seeming, that the forced growth of *salon* and *coulisse* had the innocent perfume and colour of the primrose by the hedgerow. Has the faculty

of writing such letters died out? We never see them now, not since Grenville Murray went over to the majority. Some of Browne's little stories, too, were gems in their way, with the finish of cameos wrought by a master.

Nor must I forget Mr. Elliot Bowyer, of the *Morning Advertiser*, and for many years dramatic critic of *Galignani's Messenger*, an elder who would not admit he was old, a model of exuberant, almost frolicsome, juvenility in deportment and dress, conversation and writing. What a memory was his for classical lore and contemporary gossip, and what a jaunty way he had of flooding you with the full tide of his knowledge! He was essentially a club man, and his airy levity—forgive me, St. Francis of Sales, the latest patron of pressmen, if I was wrong—to me, was simply delightful. I often think that his birth must have been presided over by Juventas, and that Momus must have ladled him out his infantile arrowroot; he

was a male Ninon de l'Enclos with Palmerston's sprig of parsley twirling between his lips, and Luca fa, Presto's quill ready to jump out of his inkstand.

Of the Hon. Captain Bingham and Mr. Hely Bowes I cannot speak freely, I am under obligations to both; each has been so much my friend that I almost feel like the man in Goldoni's comedy: "*non ho cuore de dirne male, e non ho coraggio de dirne bene.*" The former was one of the most trustworthy authorities in French history I ever met, the latter, one of the most trustworthy guides in French politics, only he was too fond of dealing with *la haute politique* for my predilections. Reared in the companionship of such worthies as Prévost Paradol, John Lemoinne and Edouard Hervé, Mr. Bowes was of the school where solid views were to be had, and a straightforward tone acquired. He was, and is still, I believe, the chief corre-

spondent of the *Standard,* and may be regarded among the safest judges of events on the Continent, for he is uniformly careful and conscientious, and is terse in the expression of his opinions, never beating about the bush; but he has just one fault—he is ever so little inclined to be a *frondeur.* After all, this, which is but a tendency to take the part of the side which is down, is less a fault than a chivalrous foible.

The dean of the syndicate of the English press in Paris was Mr. Crawford, of the *Daily News,* a gentleman of evenly balanced mind and honest instincts, and personally much respected; the list closes with my comrade, Merrick of the *Echo,* who yielded to none of the band in common-sense and industry.

Hard workers as these gentlemen were and undoubted as the influence was which they exercised on the formation of public opinion in England on matters of Continental discussion,

some of their names will not be known beyond their own immediate circles. That is the curse of the English system, under which one may toil and toil the dear days of his life and never get the credit of his labour. He is swallowed up in the omnivorous maw of anonymous journalism. Unless he is a Russell or a Sala, and singles himself from the throng by exceptional talent or the force of circumstances exceptionally favourable, he is unknown—the veriest obscure drudge. Brain is the bondsman of capital. There is some hope that this will not always be so. Recently through the medium of an American magazine, and more recently still through the medium of an illustrated almanac published by the purveyor of a fashionable soap, the Great Unknown condescended to disclose his features. Nor was he wrong. It is impossible to assign any valid reason why the Editor should be surrounded with mystery any more than the Premier, the

Doctor, or the Bishop. He pretends to teach us how to govern ourselves, heal our ills, and be righteous. Why should he be invested with secrecy like the oracles of Dodona? If his superiority be not a sham, let him stand out in the sunlight and show himself.

In France, it is different; the writer, by a law passed under the first Republic, has to sign his articles. This may be a disadvantage to him in the political sense, as it forces him to consistency. If he has ambition to become a Deputy, his utterances in the Chamber must not diverge too angularly from his manifestoes in print. Indeed, when one thinks over it, this fathering of articles would be a distinct disadvantage, a deadly blow, to some eager adventurers in the British House of Commons, who are one thing at the writing-desk, and another in St. Stephen's. But such an argument, which could be welcomed only by the charlatan, is more than

countervailed by the undeniable fact that the French system protects the writer in purse and elevates him in position. Grace to it he makes his *clientèle*, which will follow him, no matter to whom the manufactured rag on which he fixes his ideas may belong; and again, the *littérateur* —he who has individuality, originality, heart, and that which the Germans call *geist*—is not confounded with the mechanical scribe.

In this country, soul is too often put on the level of scissors and paste by the outside public (by whom, after all, the professional writer must live), and he who creates gets no more credit for his travail of thought than if he were the craftsman who pared and planed and sand-papered. On the English press, principally because of the fashion of anonymity, there is too much scope for intermeddling with style by those who have not the faculty to create, but imagine they have to improve the creations of others.

"The style," says Buffon, "is the man," and it is tantalising in the extreme to have the sentences on which one may have bestowed infinite pains remodelled by others. There are such persons, I presume, on most newspapers. Anthony Trollope and Sir Gavin Duffy have had to complain of them; and I, perhaps, might be justified in raising my voice too, only I am well aware that these cobblers of literature, who are about fit to tack on the tail to a semicolon, would amend the language of Macaulay, or Thackeray, or Carlyle with a light heart. A copyist corrected Rossini; Joe Smith rectified the Bible. The tribe is not new. I was reminded of that in reading in Fitzpatrick's "Ireland Before the Union," a reference to the notorious Shamado, who once owned the *Freeman's Journal*: "The vanity of Mr. Higgins was overweening, as he sat at the editorial desk. Without any pretension as to style, though with much to low cunning,

he altered every manuscript which came to the office for insertion. If an article reached him from Edmund Burke, the sham would not be satisfied unless he made some changes in it." In France he dare not do that, all because of the blessed regulation of signed articles. The writer's signature would warn him to keep his hands off. I despise the petty fellow. I have suffered from him. He mistakes the sponge for the pumice-stone. As a rule, he knows little of books or the world. He sits from day to day in his own stuffy snail-shell and fancies it the broad universe. What a grin of pitiful satisfaction he must wear, as he mauls the production of those whose abilities he envies!

The impersonal "we" has its advocates, Mr. James Payn among others. It is shared with monarchs, but even they do condescend to let the community know who they are. To me it is worse than a corporation, which has no soul, rules

Coke—neither a soul to be saved nor a posterior to be kicked; for it assumes authority without showing qualification or facing responsibility. That "we" is a monstrous absurdity, the relic of times less independent, and, with God's blessing, I shall live to see its affectations scorned and laughed at in England.

There is one satisfaction in the Republic of letters; it *is* a Republic. Brains are not hereditary; but the work they create can be sent down to posterity, a more lasting and solid possession than lands or plate. He who is so poor to-day that he must plod wearily for his pittance may speak to coming ages through his writings, may stamp the influence of his genius on generations unborn. Therein lie his consolations and his aid to dignity; therein springs the thought which buoys him up when he is splashed by the carriage-wheels of the rich tradesman driving by. When oppressed by the carks and cares of this mean

world, he can retire to his study (if he have one), wrap himself up in cloak invisible, and transport him as on the carpet of the magician to regions far asunder, not of space only, but of time. He can watch with quickening pulse some scene of glorious tourney with Scott, or linger in amorous dalliance in Persian vales with Moore; he can wander with the austere Dante through the dim corridors of the Inferno, or storm with Milton the very citadels of Heaven!

Zounds! Here I am off at a tangent, buffeting with shadows and in temper most fretful. Who can avoid irritation in this murky London winter clime, where sunshine is doled out by driblets?

CHAPTER VI.

Looking for the Missing Link—Pascal Duprat—Death of a Voltairean Dragoon—Contrast between French and Irish Funerals—"Who's Dead?"—Fight over a Corpse—Tears in a Playhouse—Accident in a Gymnasium—A Grand Carouse—Assault on a Beadle—The Police take steps and Dublin Whiskey—Mortimer plays *Deus ex Machinâ*—Going through the Mill—Some Transactions of the Society of Ciceronian Cicerones—Art Secrets—The Disguised Millionaire—"Little California"—Henry Herman—Another Fenian Head-Centre, and a Minister from China.

Among those who came to lodge at the *Pension*, say in 1868—I cannot give the date exactly, having as strong an aversion to diary keeping as the officers of the 46th—were two remarkable personages, who were attached by strong ties, Mdme. Clémence Royer and M. Pascal Duprat.*

* M. Duprat died while this volume was at press.

The lady, who came from Geneva, that refuge of the recalcitrant, was of the strong-minded persuasion and, in accordance with the traditions of the tribe, wore her neutral-tinted hair short. She was not well-favoured, and she was of a certain age; but her eyes were intelligent, and she had the reputation of being very learned. She had acquired her celebrity by rendering into French the works of Darwin. I do not think she could cook a chop—I never met a strong-minded female who could; her soul was given up to higher things. For example, she took a profound interest in the origin of species and the theory of evolution. Whenever a greasy Italian happened to come into our premises with a hurdy-gurdy and an attenuated monkey, she rushed out and approached that monkey, not to present him with nuts or lump-sugar, but to inquire if he or she had a tail. I do believe if that lady were to discover a baby with a

rudimentary *queue*, she would have gone delirious with ecstasy. Yet it is hard to understand what reasonable cause for joy there could be in an approach to proof of the fantasy that mankind are promoted simians. It is not as if a poor man were to succeed to a legacy, or an upstart were to find a family tree of whose existence he had no knowledge. We used to laugh at Mdme. Royer behind the arras. I am afraid we were Philistines, and had no proper appreciation of petticoated genius in the pursuit of the missing link.

M. Duprat had been a political exile, having been banished from France on account of his objections to the *coup d'état*. A tall, thin, worn man, he, too, was strong-minded; but, by some peculiarity of strong-mindedness in his sex, wore his hair drooping over his shoulders, like a German student or an æsthetic bard. Under the Republican *régime* he has come into prominence again,

having been returned as a Deputy and sent on some foreign mission. When I think over that *Pension* now, I look upon it as a human menagerie, and often regret that I did not classify some of the rare and interesting specimens. It was no place for young people; the tales of Timothée Trimm, the barber, in *Le Petit Journal*, and of Ponson du Terrail, who made the heroes of mediæval romance read love-letters by the light of a gas lamp, were popular there, which may be accepted as the gauge of the average intellect of the inmates. There was a dampness in the social atmosphere as if several wet blankets of *bourgeois* conventionality had been hung out in the common room overnight, and when we assembled to dine it was as if the meats were of the funeral-baked order, and the guests were mutes, with a silent sorrow at their hearts, aggravated by indigestion.

Old Jovin, the captain of dragoons, who had

once escorted Charles X., died one morning in his bedroom, a solitary wretched death. He was of the Voltairean type of belief, or rather disbelief, and in answer to the query, would he like to have the ministrations of a clergyman, roundly swore that if any gentleman of the black cloth were to call upon him he would feel extreme pleasure in spitting in his face. And thus, grim and solitary, none to moisten his lips or smooth his pillow, the veteran passed away on his pallet in his narrow chamber, within hearing of the joyous shouts of laughter of the boys in the school next door. It was a shock to me when the landlady's son asked me to accompany him to the captain's room.

"I want to make an inventory of his effects, and it is illegal to do it without a witness," he said.

It was the first I had heard of his illness. Our principal object was to find the parchment ad-

mitting him to the Legion of Honour, in order to forward it to the authorities that the military funeral party to which he was entitled might be sent to follow him to the grave. We did not find it, but instead, we found letters establishing the fact that he was married, and, in a box by his bedside, a powder puff! The stern materialist had his small vanities.

We wrote to the widow, who was stopping in a garrison town in the provinces, and she arrived in time to attend the obsequies. We pinned the decoration of the veteran on the pall of his coffin, and the Irishmen in the *Pension* marched, two and two, behind it, to the Church of St. Etienne du Mont, where a brief mortuary ceremony was held. When it was over, the landlady bowed and thanked us, in other words signified that our courtesy was not needed further, and the cavalcade of hearse and one humble mourning coach trotted off to the cemetery. Not

a tear of real grief was shed. It was the coldest, least sympathetic funeral I ever saw, and I fear, if the deceased were alive and a spectator, it would have run in the groove of his humour.

Now, in Ireland, we conduct things in a different manner. It is a Christian duty, and a social gratification for all, who knew the dead, however slightly, to go with it, for a portion, at least, of its last journey. If a vehicle coming from the opposite direction encounters a funeral, the etiquette is for the driver of that vehicle to turn and go a few steps with the procession. No invitations *de faire part* are ever sent out.

I recollect my grandfather telling me that in his youth, he saw a funeral traverse the principal street of Limerick and as the sable plumes nodded past, the bystanders on the pathway joined in a dismal caoine, or mourning wail.

"Could you tell me, my good man, who is dead?" asked an English officer of a stout

fellow, who had joined with particular fervour in the ululation.

"Indeed, myself doesn't know, sir," was the answer, "but I suppose it's the poor soul in the coffin!"

That wail was, in a sense, as proper and graceful as the French practice of uncovering to a furnished hearse; it was a homage to the majesty of death.

Of course, it will be ruled ridiculous by the people who are not accustomed to look beyond their noses, and consider any custom not common in their own parish as barbarous; but is it a whit more ridiculous than casting beautiful wreaths into a pit to be immediately covered with dirty mould, or making a noise with gunpowder over an inanimate warrior? I grant you there are some customs in Ireland which are more entertaining than praiseworthy; for example, the carousals at wakes, and occasional fights.

I remember, as a boy, having witnessed a very lively bludgeon-conflict, while it lasted, at a funeral in Maryborough, in the Queen's County. A corpse was being carried to the grave, and when the corpse's brother tried to drive his car into the place of honour behind the hearse, the widow's faction resented it, and the hearse was quickly run into a wayside corner until the point of etiquette was decided. That was a scandal, but an explicable scandal—in my country, where blood is very much thicker than water. But going to funerals, except those of great soldiers or men of intellectual eminence, was not one of our favourite corporal works of mercy. A military interment in France is a pageant, and the music played is not lugubrious, but it has none of the pathos and solemnity of that most touching of all ceremonies—an English soldier's funeral. The attraction which drew us to the cemetery when civilian worthies were being laid

to rest, was the chance of seeing conspicuous public characters and hearing the orations by the grave. These pronouncements were often wearisome, and were sometimes less proofs of respect for the dead than of vanity in the living, but they gave us an opportunity of picking up French turns of speech as rendered by cultured Frenchmen. One of the best and pleasantest ways, however, to learn French of the superior pattern was that put in action by our Roumanian law-student.

They are obliged to bring out classic pieces at the Comédie Française and the Odéon on stated evenings in the week. He used to consult the bills, find out what the plays were, read them over, and then go and hear them with his Corneille, or his Racine, or his Molière in his pocket. The pronunciation he was treated to was correct to the academic point, but then, if one were to introduce it into ordinary conver-

sation it would have the same effect as talking leading articles. I never went to the Comédie Française but once, and on that occasion I had to leave the theatre for a few moments through an access of false shame. They were giving that charming idyll of the fireside, *La Joie Fait Peur*, by de Girardin's first wife, she who wrote such dainty letters under the pseudonym of Viscount de Launay. A mist settled on my opera-glasses; I was weeping. I ought to have been proud of my tears, but I was not. It was not the acting, although Brohan was in it—she for whom the proud motto of the Brohans was altered to *coquette ne veux, soubrette ne daigne, Brohan suis* —no; it was not the acting moved me so much as the perfect trifle itself. I saw it afterwards at the little house in King William Street, performed by an indifferent French company, and I wept again. I never wept in a playhouse but twice save on these occasions—once when I

watched that intense and incomparable actress, Mrs. Hermann Vezin, in a poor production called "Miss Chester," and once, but that was a long time ago, in my nervous boyhood, when a corpulent lady hit me on the funny-bone with the end of her fan for making faces at her. *La Joie Fait Peur* has been turned into English under various titles—"Kerry," "Idle Tears," and "Joy Seldom Kills," I believe among others—but the delicate aroma, I know, has been lost in one instance at least by transmission. "Kerry" is Mr. Boucicault's essay at adaptation; the beautiful affection of a mother for a son is lowered into that of a wife for a husband by his patent process. You require to take two pocket-handkerchiefs with you to do justice to his hybrid offspring—one to wipe away the tears of irresistible merriment, the other those of melting sympathy.

The avowal may be humiliating, but it is

honest; I was not in love with the French poetic drama; I preferred to drop into the Palais Royal, where one was always sure of a hearty laugh as in our own Strand; but my haunt of predilection was the Bobino, a band-box of a dramatic temple, under the august and special guardianship of the students. You could kiss hands from the stalls to the leading lady, and it was common to hear appointments for supper made from the stage to the boxes before the curtain fell. The Roumanian accompanied me there often, and won upon me by his professed admiration for Shakespeare and English dramatic literature generally, until I found him out. He argued that we had no comic Muse, and adduced in proof, that we had but one presentable comedy, and that was—ye gods of the top gallery—"Box and Cox!"

We used to frequent a gymnasium in the Rue Cujas, near the Law School, but my exercises

there were put an abrupt stop to by an accident received by unexpectedly alighting from a trapeze. I was swinging to and fro, and in mid flight—Heaven knows what I was thinking of—my hands slipped round the bar as if it were greased and I came full slap on the broad of my back on the tan. Luckily, the tan was thickly laid, the drop was not more than nine feet and I was inert. As I reached the floor I lay dazed for awhile, but not a bone was broken. They ran over to me and made a fuss, but I picked myself up and felt no worse at the time. I was stiff, however, on the following day, and for many days afterwards, and had to give up the trapeze business. This gymnastic drill should be followed by every dweller in a city. It makes one feel fit and gives him that suppleness, strength of muscle, and readiness which go so far towards building up health, appetite, and cheerfulness, and these, I firmly

believe, are the necessary foundations of animal courage. How gloriously the blood courses through the frame after a couple of hours' varied practice on the vaulting-horse, climbing a ladder backwards, lifting oneself on the rungs, or working the pliant sinews with dumb-bells and Indian clubs, and then while in a glow of perspiration, rushing into a bath-chamber where spouts of cold water play on every square inch of skin, from above and below, back and front. There is more vigour in that than in a score doses of quinine and a pint bottle of tincture of iron.

We, Irish colonists, cultivated our bodies as well as our minds. But a day came and we erred—I plead guilty, with extenuating circumstances—we went on a grand carouse. A set of Lever's novels came into our hands. That was the primal cause of our fall. A course of reading of that lively story-teller led

us into the fallacy that the true Irishman was a reckless impetuous let-the-morrow-take-care-of-itself individual, whose whole duty was to clear five-barred gates, duck bailiffs in a horse-pond, fight duels, lead forlorn hopes, abduct heiresses, and drink every man else under the table. We had no hunters; neither bailiffs nor horse-ponds were available; duels *à l'Irlandaise* were out of date, besides nobody would pick a quarrel with us; the Empire really meant peace at the moment; no decently dowered girl would peep at us. What were we to do? There was but one resource left—a consignment of Jamieson's whiskey having been sent over to one of us, and St. Patrick's Eve arriving synchronously, we adopted it: we went in for hard drinking. Not being accustomed to the potent liquor, it overcame us like a summer's cloud. Some of us retired, others dispersed to the streets, I sat down in my horse-box and

tried to construe Sophocles with the help of a lexicon. I failed, and waxed morosely wearisome. My head drooped, and I was sinking into slumber, when I was roused by a peremptory knocking at the door. I shook myself up and opened it. A *sergent de ville* in a white heat of passion stood outside.

"Ah! you thought to escape me—— I beg pardon" and he stood amazed.

"What is the matter, my friend?"

"I was following an individual who has assaulted the beadle of a church; he ran in here——"

"And you turning into the first room you meet, accuse the inmate of being the assailant. It is after sunset. Do you know, my friend, that is violation of domicile?"

"No. I did not force the door. I knocked, and you opened. But I must find this *scélérat.*"

"Had you not better go to the bottom of the

passage and consult the lady of the house or the domestics?"

He took my advice and went towards the main building of the *Pension*. As I was following him, a whisper from one of the horse-boxes caught my ear. I loitered behind, and heard the explanation of the appearance of the policeman. It was one of my countrymen, who had been sipping too copiously of the Jamieson. As he and my other compatriots of this night's adventure are no more, I withhold their real names, and shall call them Smith, Brown, Jones, and Robinson. This was Smith.

"It's all right, old man," he said. "I went into St. Etienne du Mont to pray. A fellow in livery came up to interrupt me at my devotions —said I was praying too loudly—and I knocked the varlet down and left. He yelled for the police, a *sergent de ville* rushed at me; I bolted, another started up and drew his rapier. I

plunged at him, he stepped aside, and here I am. It's all right."

"On the contrary, it's all wrong. In France resistance to the constituted powers is a very serious thing. He is here now. Hide."

At that moment the *sergent de ville* came up with the landlady, who said he had asked to see all the dwellers in the line of rooms in order to identify his man; she had consented, as she was sure he had made a mistake; it was some intruder, it could not be any of her lodgers.

We went into Brown's room. Brown, who was red-headed, was making florid speeches to himself in front of a mirror. He filled out a glass of "old Dublin," and gravely presented it to the agent of authority. No, that was not the criminal.

We went into the peccant Smith's room. He was in bed, with a handkerchief tied round his

head, groaning in the agonies of simulated neuralgia. The other rooms were empty. While the policeman was prosecuting his search, another *sergent de ville* arrived, and begged the landlady to inform him did she know anything of a Monsieur Jones.

"Yes, he is a most exemplary young man."

"Well, we found him embracing the railings of the Pantheon a few minutes ago: he was unable to stand, and we took him to the station. When we asked him who he was and did he know anybody, he referred us to a Monsieur Robinson. His reference was not far to seek: he was asleep in the nearest cell. He is a lunatic, I think, this Robinson, for he solemnly gave himself in charge about two hours ago, and insisted on being taken into custody."

"But why do you come here?" I asked.

"We found this address in Jones's pocket."

The landlady sent her son to the police-

station; both Jones and Robinson were redeemed from bondage and brought home in a victoria. But the assault on the beadle was not to be condoned so easily. He would be sure to recognise Smith again, and there would be a very unpleasant exposure, fines to pay, imprisonment to endure, publication of names in the newspapers: it was a very terrible thing, unparalleled, most disgraceful—violent and unprovoked assault, coupled with sacrilege, and rebellion against the representatives of Government. What was to be done? Luckily, Mortimer dropped in, heard the details of our misfortune, took his hat, and vanished. He saw his friend, the chief of the secret police department. We heard no more of the matter. It was judiciously hushed up. The beadle got a golden salve for his capsized frame and wounded dignity. But it was considered advisable that we should leave the *Pension* at the end of the month.

The next day we held a serious self-accusing council, five pale, humiliated, head-achy Solomons in judgment. Thereat we made a pyre of Lever's novels, drained what was left of Jamieson's whiskey into a slop-bucket, and vowed to live soberly, piously, and justly for all time to come.

Let us hope we were not unfaithful to our vow.

Well, we were young, and as the poor boy who fell at the Kashgill Pass remarked, perhaps that respectable old gentleman, Methuselah, the son of Enoch, made mistakes before he came to the age of discretion, say in his hundred-and-fiftieth year or so.

This, I know, has nothing to do with actual experiences as a Special Correspondent; but if my readers will bear with me in the initiatory stage, I promise them that they shall hear a great deal—perhaps, too much—of that business yet. There must be an apprenticeship to everything, and I fancy that queer life in Paris—life of hard

study, of discipline at bodily exercises, of spasmodic riotousness, of converse with active intellects, of days when we lived, for a day, at the rate of five thousand a year, and of days when we dined with Duke Humphrey—was about as good a novitiate as one could pass for the active and quickly discriminating craft of historian of passing events. One must go through the mill—to use the homely phrase which carries so much meaning. I hold that no man's education is complete until he has been forty-eight hours without food or lodging or the wherewithal to get them. Until then he does not plumb his resources, and if he comes out of that ordeal right, with as proud and cheerful a spirit as he entered, he may begin to think he is a man. If he pules, or begs, or rails at fate or meditates roguery, then he is not a man, and the sooner he sidles into a pauper's grave the better for himself and for that glorious ideal humanity, of which he is the wretched *simulacrum*.

We went through the mill when we left the *Pension*, and took up our residence here and there in the Latin Land. As our allowances came monthly, and the periods of their arrival were simultaneous, it so happened that we were princes the first week, we were provident *bourgeois* the second, we were assiduous Benedictines the third, content with meagre fare and deep in our books, and the fourth we were downright paupers. In this fourth week of regrets and magnificent promises for the future, we constituted ourselves into the Society of Ciceronian Cicerones, and prowled about the picture-galleries, offering our services as guides to English visitors, and occasionally making a pretty penny by our industry. This is one of the few callings which a gentleman with no professional training can adopt and earn money at without soiling his hands. It demands no capital, no authorization, no character, nothing but a little reading, a good manner, a smooth tongue, and a neat

attire. Art-knowledge is not absolutely essential; but if the amateur guide possesses it, so much the better. There are a few tricks of the trade which are readily acquired. For instance, old ladies like scriptural subjects, and young ladies those with a love legend attached; but the pictures to show the women generally are those in which children are prominent. The ignorant wealthy are fond of glaring colour; boys like battle-scenes; and self-educated men, who have got up in the world and are anxious to prove themselves equal to their position, are invariably fetched by anything upon which they can expatiate. Put them before a canvas which tells a story, suppose it is only a mythological or a mythical one, and gives them the chance of displaying the information they have heaped up by their reading, and they are as pleased as the proverbial Punch—so pleased that they may treat you to dinner in addition to paying your regular day's fee. Those same people will

buy a picture less for its worth than for the sake of its story or the name of the painter. Many want something they can stand before, right hand in breeches' pocket, and chin fondled in the left, and say:

"Ah! beautiful thing that—first-rate idea—capitally worked out—observe the grouping. You know it, of course? Don't! Well now! Scene from the Greek War of Independence—the rescue of Bendagista. They do say Bendagista was modelled from Byron's 'Maid of Athens.' Look at that elbow, you dog," and here the right hand is extracted from the breeches' pocket, and playfully dug into the ribs of the guest. And so on, *ad libitum,* as the man is mellow and his wine is good.

Practising upon this weakness, Montbard was enabled to sell a really spirited sketch in oils once, which had hung too long upon his hands. It was a figure of a Spanish priest, with a cigarette in his

mouth, wiping the blade of a rapier with a handkerchief. Advised by experience, he flung a few clots of blood over the steel, placed the feet and the képi of a supposititious Spanish soldier-enemy, just run through, at a corner of the canvas, and labelled the whole: "The Cura Santa Cruz—Episode of the Carlist Insurrection." Father Miguel, whom I knew, never carried more lethal weapon than a walking-stick.

During this season of imperative art tours, I was in Walsh's studio one day and was prompted by the evil spirit to disguise myself in a set of strange garments employed in dressing up a model for some Russian landscape. With a seal-skin cap, a fur-trimmed great-coat, a few smudges of paint, and a heavy black beard lent by a comrade who was a patron of the masked balls, I looked rich enough and ugly enough to be Shylock's confidential clerk. I hied me to the Louvre and planted myself beside one of the entrances.

I was at once pounced upon by one of the amateur guides.

"*Monsieur veut-il bien visiter le Musée?*"

"Non comprong, sire," gruffly from the hedge of the heavy beard.

"*Der Herr ist Deutscher?*"

A shake of the head.

"*Parlate Italiano, signor?*"

As I gave no response, "Hang it all, I wish I knew Hebrew," muttered the guide in an undertone, and then he tried me again.

"*Habla usted Español?*"

"Bother their jargon!" I muttered, "why don't the fellows learn English?"

"English, sir, all right. I would never have thought it, I assure you, you have such a distinguished foreign appearance. Would you like to be shown over the gallery of the Louvre, sir? Grandest pictures in the world, perfect masterpieces—admitted so to be by Mr. Ruskin, Sir

Edwin, and all the great guns of the Royal Academy. It is a treat not to be enjoyed every day. Shall I take you over them, my lord?"

I granted consent.

The distinguished member of the Ciceronian Cicerones conducted me over the corridors, rooms, and halls, pointing out the beauties of the different schools with graphic volubility.

At last I sat down for a moment's rest, removed the beard while his back was turned, and threw open the great-coat.

"*Musha!* the devil's luck attend you. I suppose you consider this a joke."

"Ay, and a deucedly good joke, too."

"Well, you may have robbed me, and yourself for the matter of that, of a good dinner this evening."

"All right, old man, I am in funds to-day. Come over to the Café de Danemark, where Mortimer is waiting for the result."

In the evenings, we generally trudged to a people's restaurant off the Chaussée du Maine, "la Petite Californie." This establishment was worth inspecting. It was started by a man ambitious of political renown and the popularity with the electors which helps towards it. He determined to appeal to the voting masses through their stomachs. He fitted up an immense room with forms and tables, and served wines and meat at prime cost. The accommodation was not luxurious, nor the company refined; but the food was wholesome and the liquors unadulterated. When we went there, we always bought two sous' worth of bread at the second baker's before we entered—the second was important to be noted, he gave better weight than the other. And then we mixed with the stream of brown-faced, horny-handed men in blouses streaming in, each with his loaf under his arm. "Hard-up" was the legend on every brow. We took a knife and fork

out of a trough at the doorway and shouted our wants over the counter. For four sous one had a plate of beef *à la mode*, that with bowl of soup for six sous; vegetables cost from one to two sous. In short, you could dine amply for ten sous, and wash your dinner down with a *demisiette* of wine for three sous extra. There were disadvantages, but a hungry man would consider them beneath his notice. There were no table-cloths, no napkins, no waiters to dance attendance upon you; little Italians edged about begging, under the pretence of being minstrels; there was an odd stand-up fight between unpolite guests, and occasionally an exceptionally rude workman, hearing you speak English, ejaculated, "Oh! yes —milor—Gottam!" Or as the texture and colour of your hands were observed, you might have been taken for a *mouchard* and spurned, or for a political refugee and have been venerated. Still the "Little California" was a providence to

the limp of purse. When our purses were full, we never went there.

Lest it should be imagined that impecuniosity was our usual condition, I must own that it was so seldom, and nearly always of our own improvidence. I have no desire to lay unfair claim to that crown of martyrdom. There were those in the gay and opulent capital—there are now, and ever—who were sincerely to be pitied. We were not. I was acquainted with one splendid fellow who had been a wealthy planter in Carolina, and had been colonel of a crack Confederate corps during the American civil conflict; he was earning his bread as a fiddler in the orchestra of the Comédie Française. He had lost his property and his country, but he bore his grief philosophically.

"The fortune of war," he used to say: "we played for a big stake; we lost, and we Southerns are not the men to quarrel when we have to pay and pretend the dice were cogged."

Touching that conflict, it was in Paris I first came across a gentleman who took an honourable part in it as an officer of an Alabama regiment, and who has since attained a reputation in London as a poetic dramatist — Mr. Henry Herman. He was then editing an American paper in the English, or American-English, language, I forget which; but it did not matter much to Herman, for he is an admirable linguist, and could pour out his leaders in German or French if needful. At the American Legation one night I met two remarkable men from the New World, no less than a Head-Centre of Fenians, and the minister for China — John Savage and Anson Burlinghame. Savage is poet and artist rather than conspirator, neatly built, with expressive face, musical voice, and eyes full of geniality. His wife, daughter of the inventor of the American flag, the famous Stars and Stripes, bore a most extraordinary

resemblance to the Empress Eugénie. Her sister is married to General di Cesnola, who added so much to our stores of antiquarian knowledge by his exhumations at Cyprus. Burlinghame was a noble type of manhood, of mixed Welsh and Highland-Scotch stock, the very one to furnish the pioneers of a new civilisation, because combining the energy that wins with the tenacity that holds and consolidates — the Celtic fire disciplined and kept under control, as fire is in the steam-engine, by American utilitarianism— tall, massy, with regular features tinted as if by the sun of the tropics, and a full broad forehead, circled with dark brown hair. When I saw him he was as plainly dressed as Benjamin Franklin. No flame of tinsel flashed from his coat; he did not wear even a button of honour, yet there was a quiet consciousness of power in his mien, as well there might be; for this was the representative of a territory one and

two-fifths the size of Europe, peopled with over five hundred millions of inhabitants. He, a mere person in his garb, glanced now and again with a shrewd smile of kindly humour at a pompous being — a personage most assuredly — under a chandelier, his showy uniform, bespangled as a harlequin's jacket, glittering in the strong light like a flamingo's wing, and flinging back stronger reflections from edges of shimmering bullion. His breast was resplendent as the front of one of the shops where decorations are sold in the galleries of the Palais Royal. He must have been Knight of the Green Crocodile of the Nile, Chevalier of St. Pinchbeck, and Companion of the Exalted Order of the Electro-plated Candlestick, in addition to wearing the collar of the Bath and Washhouse, and the insignia of the Pouncet-Box. What an august entity, to be sure! and this personage was — the Minister of the Principality of Monaco, repre-

sentative of a territory fully three-quarters of a mile long by three hundred yards broad, and peopled by eight hundred inhabitants!

Burlinghame was brought up amid the great clearings of the West, but was educated at the State University of Michigan. He graduated in law at Harvard, and, like most American lawyers, devoted himself to politics. Boston returned him to Congress, where he soon became conspicuous as an Abolitionist. He had a stubborn belief that a black man had a soul as a white man has, and was the work of the same God's creation. When Lincoln was elected President, he named him the United States Minister in Vienna; but, as Burlinghame was non-acceptable to Austria on account of his Italian sympathies, he was appointed Envoy to China. He got on well there, simply because he treated the Chinese as equals, and when he was preparing to return home Prince Kong

requested him at the farewell dinner to act as mouthpiece of China in Europe and America.

The Emperor was very friendly to the American; he had lived in New York, and he had his hobby about China. From the windows of the Tuileries he could for years see the masts of a three-hundred-ton ship, "Paris-Port-de-Mer," which he fondly fancied would inaugurate a direct communication with Shanghai. She was wrecked on her maiden voyage out—wrecked at the mouth of the Seine. Luckless ship! And, I may add, luckless Emperor!

CHAPTER VII.

Gambetta's Rise—The Brain-pan of Richelieu—An Ink-splash of Decorum—Cora Pearl shedding Pearls—Adolphe Thiers—Honour and the Wash-tub—The *Lanterne* is Lit—Assaults on the Empress and Prince Imperial—A Big-headed Baby—A Trinity of Tragedies—Rochefort graduates as a Municipal Officer—He essays Authorship, and ultimately strikes a Bonanza—Duelling Anecdotes—His connection with *Figaro*—Too Late for Dinner.

THE signs and tokens multiplied that the Empire was approaching its term. Gambetta had sprung into fame at a bound by his speech on behalf of Delescluze, of the *Réveil*, who was arraigned for encouraging a subscription to erect a monument to the Deputy Baudin, killed sixteen years previously while protesting against the statesmanship of surprise. The speech was masterly from

every point of view, except as a lawyer's defence of his client. It was not an excuse for Delescluze, but a fierce accusation of the Government. Assuming the character of public prosecutor, Gambetta put the Empire on its trial; under the shelter of his barrister's gown, he poured forth a tirade of resonant invectives against the evils and abuses of the *régime*. His opportunity had come; the harangues to his fellow-students and coffee-house companions were but as rehearsals of this grand effort, and he delivered it with the concentrated fire of his Southern race. It took immensely, for it was the bold-spoken outlet of much which had been thought and felt in secret. It was the first knock-down blow to the Empire. The life of Gambetta thence became interwoven with the history of France; it is unnecessary to linger over it here.

But other agencies were at work to sap the edifice which was outwardly so solid and superb,

and foremost among these was the printing press. Gambetta made his name by his oral attacks on Imperialism, Rochefort by his attacks in print.

When the First Napoleon was told that the Commons were growing mutinous, it is said—with what truth I know not—that he was wont to issue an order to re-gild the dome of the Invalides. That device would no longer avail. But the advisers of the Second Empire had others. The Exhibition of 1867 was palpably designed to amuse the people and divert their thoughts from home concerns of more serious import. So were the expedition to Mexico, and the exaggerated French interest taken in the opening of the Suez Canal—a scheme whose advantages were overpoweringly, almost exclusively English. But there is never wanting some topic to stuff the greedy mouth of the Commons in an inventive and volatile city like Paris. I can

recall some of these, but I cannot undertake to give them in the exact dates of their succession.

First, there was the discovery of a slice of the skull of Richelieu, missing since the Revolution, that which is always spelled with a capital "R." A great to-do was made over this *trouvaille;* the archæologists, ethnologists, and expounders of history were all agog, and by-and-by, when it was determined that the yellow morsel of cranium should be restored to the tomb in which the rest of the mortal part of the Cardinal was enclosed, in a church near the Sorbonne, there was a solemn religious service, a pealing of organ pipes, and parade of dress uniforms. It is doubtful whether the bit of dried bone was authentic, but even if it were, this pomp of ceremonial over it was a puerility and a profanation. Richelieu was not a divinity, nor was a section of his skull-plate his immortal essence. As well might one have held funeral rites over the leg of Lord Anglesea

at Waterloo. Better! That did some good. It kept a Belgian husbandman in competence for years.

Another source of excited gossip for awhile was the insult to Carpeaux's group of statuary —dancing nymphs or something of the kind— outside the new Opera House. One morning a splash of black ink was found on the limbs of one of the nude marble figures, thereby calling the more attention to its indecency, if indecency there were. Who threw that ink? It may have been a fanatic, it may have been a thoughtless practical joker, it may have been a secret agent of Imperialism. Whoever it was, he or she deserved to be flogged with nettles. The sculpture impure! What a prurient mind the nasty person who arrived at that conception must have had! God's work is never impure, and the imitation of that work—artistically made, and made of it in a pose, natural, graceful, and lovely—should

raise the thoughts of onlookers to reverence. But a controversy was provoked on the subject, and, perhaps, this was exactly what the iconoclast aimed at. That most unpleasant and acrimonious of polemists, that most combative preacher of the creed of peace, Louis Veuillot, who wrote with a scalpel dipped in vitriol, was foremost in the discussion, and declared that the man who disfigured a masterpiece of art did righteously. Louis Veuillot was no authority on what was either righteous or becoming.

Then there was the scandal of the English courtesan, Emma Crutch, appearing on the stage. She was what theatre-goers in England call a "stick;" she was not even as handsome as those rows of chorus-girls who are sticks too, but who are too often encouraged to degrade the English stage with their presence. She had a fine figure, was not chary of displaying its proportions, could dress magnificently, and had a reputation

that went far as an attraction to those inane profligates who patronise the drama by helping sticks to wear sealskin jackets and drive broughams on a weekly stipend of five-and-twenty shillings. She made her *début* at the Bouffes, and distinguished herself by dropping pearls off her sandals and disdaining to pick them up. Possibly she meant to give opportunity to some *chroniqueur* to make allusion to her professional name of Cora Pearl. The students waxed indignant at the impudence of this minion of luxury, and a party of virtuous brawlers from the Latin Land, led by the immaculate Pipe-en-Bois, hissed her off the boards.

There were receptions at the Academy, where the dwarfish, pumpkin-headed, wrinkled, but well-preserved Adolphe Thiers, always spectacled and cozily wrapped up, with his green coat silver-braided, and with woven palm branches on the skirts, took care to put himself in evi-

dence. He invariably set me thinking of a pudgy, chatting seneschal—why, I know not, for I have never seen a seneschal.

There were the periodical duels, born of a nothing on the Boulevard. Paul de Cassagnac was always ready to accept a challenge—from a man less skilled in fence than himself for choice. He, and his cousin Lissagaray, fought for a couple of hours, with intervals, on a Sunday forenoon; but there was one affair of honour in particular, which tickled the town immensely, and put the custom out of fashion. An advanced Radical challenged Henri Chabrillat, the present essee of the Gaîté Theatre, but then a journalist. They went to the ground, and when the Radical took off his coat, *he exposed a dirty shirt!* The rapier nearly fell out of Chabrillat's hand. As he said, when relating the adventure to me a few days after: "I blushed when I saw my unwashed antagonist, the poor devil

had evidently never handled the *flingot* before, and I felt that I was going to make myself ridiculous."

These duels were usually fought with the small sword, and luckily—or unluckily, perhaps—were seldom fatal. Honour was satisfied if blood were drawn; if one of the adversaries were disarmed, honour was equally satisfied. When pistols were the weapons chosen, the results were mostly harmless. The explanation may be left to the epigrammatist:

—Comment finît cette querelle ?
—Trois fois chacun ils ont tiré :
Ne se visant qu'à la cervelle,
Les balles n'ont rien rencontré.

Lastly, there came, as a happy hazard to the perturbed partisans of the Empire, that ghastly, skilful, and most seasonable series of murders by the brute Troppmann (of whom I shall have more to say anon); but all these excitements

only diverted the public mind for a passing hour: it went back to the old question—how is this administration to be put down?—little thinking that the administration, left alone, was steadily preparing to put down itself, and it took not only Gambetta but Rochefort and all the foes of the *régime* to its bosom.

Of the career of Rochefort so little is known in England that I am induced to jot down a few notes which were furnished to me by one who professed to be intimately acquainted with him. He filled so prominent a place in French politics, that the attempt to sketch his individuality and antecedents must possess a fair share of interest. His *Lanterne* flashed like a wrecker's flare on the unquiet world of Paris; it blazed with a reckless splutter like that of naphtha—one which threatened conflagration as well as emitted light, and which smelt offensively. The truth was, the community was tired of the

Empire, was secretly ashamed of its corruptions and chafed against its restraints. Rochefort gave a voice to the general discontent, and in the admiration for the rashness of his audacity and the pungency of his satire, his coarseness and personalities were forgotten. Assuredly he was witty, but abusively witty. He assailed a woman and a boy, the Empress and the Prince Imperial, in language which no clean-minded, self-respecting gentleman should permit himself. The woman may have had slender equipment of knowledge, and may have interfered with affairs of state more than she ought to have done; but he should have considered the way she was brought up and her sex. The boy may have been sickly-precocious and pragmatical; but he should have considered his training and his years. Too often in France—and elsewhere, perhaps—when a man commits himself to political partisan warfare, delicacy and

fair-play are thrown to the four winds. It is considered legitimate to hint away the honour of females, to hit males under the belt, and to make jokes of the personal deformities of all in the opposite camp. Rochefort did this in a most artistic and amusing fashion, and was applauded to the echo by the haters of the Empire and the lovers of scandal—and their name was legion. The only Frenchmen who did not admire his *tactique*, although indirectly it might have served them, were the Legitimists, the very party from whose bosom he had sprung.

This violent pamphleteer of pronounced Republican convictions was born a Count. The event took place at Paris in 1832, the year of the cholera. The most remarkable feature about him in his youth was the size of his head, which was big and bulbous to that extent that his nurse thought within herself that if the Count ever brought any money to his family, it would

be as a natural curiosity at the Gingerbread Fair.

Rochefort's family was very poor, poorer far than that of the Marquis whose daughter's mother rejected me. As he grew he became very tall, very thin, narrow-chested, a spidery spindle-shanks; but his head seemed less in proportion to his body. He was sent to the College Saint-Louis to be educated. He did nothing wonderful there except manifest a prodigious memory for what he was not required to learn, and a neat talent for rhyming. His professors resolved to avail themselves of the latter gift and asked him to write a poem to be recited at a breakfast, to be given at the Archbishopric to the most studious lads of the Paris lyceums by Mgr. Sibour, in honour of his installation in the archiepiscopal dignity.

I must interpose a parenthesis here to remind those whose memories are short of the appalling

coincidence in fate of the three last Archbishops of Paris. Theirs is a trinity of tragedies: all died violent deaths. Mgr. Affre was slain on a barricade—slain as he spoke words of peace and held the olive branch: murder by misadventure. Mgr. Sibour was struck down on the altar of St. Etienne du Mont by a ruffian priest: murder maniacal. Cardinal Darboy was put up against a wall and shot by a hell-dog section of Communists, posing as patriots: murder most foul, cruel, and cowardly.

Well, at the breakfast at the Archbishopric, Rochefort, who had asked to be let keep his poem to himself till the great day, was called upon to speak his piece. Modestly and quietly he rose and delivered an ode to his Grace, congratulating him on having adopted the children of the assassins of General Bréa. Horror! It was as if a Pauline of London had read a Latin panegyric of the heroes of Majuba Hill at a

scholastic celebration under the patronage of the Right Hon. the ex-Lord Mayor Fowler.

Rochefort took his baccalaureate in 1850. His father wished him to adopt the medical profession, but he fainted at the first amputation he saw, and the story goes—but I doubt it—that the patient had to hold a smelling-bottle to his nose. Having divorced himself from medicine through incompatibility of temper, he gave lessons in Latin for starvation pay for a while, and then applied for employment at the Hôtel de Ville. He was appointed to the Patent Office at a salary of one hundred francs a month: from that department he passed successively to the Roads and Bridges and the Archives, at increasing rates of remuneration. For five years he was a municipal officer, but he spent his leisure in scribbling plots of vaudevilles and acquiring a technical knowledge of pictures. The taste for theatrical authorship was inherited, his father, the Marquis,

having written numerous successful comediettas; his taste for pictures was natural, and was cultivated by the care of a renovator of old canvases of his acquaintance, who taught him to detect the real from the sham by certain tricks in the contour of a landscape or the lie of a leg, peculiar to certain masters. Aided by this cunning preceptor, and by constant visits to the galleries and the sale-rooms, he earned the reputation of a connoisseur, and might have made a competence by attending at the art-auctions in the Hôtel des Ventes. But Rochefort was too much of a live man to descend to the lucrative drudgery of picture-dealing.

In 1856, his name appeared first before the public as joint author with Commerson of the *Tintamarre* of a vaudeville in one act, *Un Monsieur Bien Mis.* He made £4 18s. 6d. by that effort. Many subsequent contributions were written for the stage by himself or in collaboration

with Cham, Pierre Véron of the *Charivari*, and others, the most successful being *L'Homme du Sud*, produced at the Palais Royal, and *La Vieillesse de Brididi* at the Variétés.

In 1858, his first article was published in a minor paper called the *Presse Théâtrale*, which paid its staff in compliments. The compliment which Giaccomelli, the editor, paid Rochefort for his initial article was to remark that wit was not absolutely prohibited in his journal. This dramatic exponent, like some I could mention in England, led a vegetable existence by buttering-up actors, and was a member of what Nestor Roqueplan used to call "the printed claque." As Rochefort did not take kindly to the eulogy of incompetence, he was dismissed for incapacity, and forfeited his salary of nothing a week. A year later he was enrolled on the *Charivari* staff, where he was paid two sous the line, and was not warned to soft-soap the subscribers.

While on this periodical, the more sarcastic *Punch* of Paris, he was dismissed from the Hôtel de Ville for his villanous handwriting; but Baron Haussmann sent for him three days afterwards and offered him a better situation, which he honourably declined: it came to him as a bribe. The *Charivari* did not suit him; the letter-press in it was sacrificed to the illustrations (a similar fault is noticeable in some American magazines to-day), and he jumped at a proposition from Aurélien Scholl to join the *Nain Jaune.* In its columns he wrote his first *chronique.* He had happened on his richest vein. Villemessant snapped at the new man for the *Figaro,* and gave him the equivalent of twenty pounds a month for one article a week. At the close of his term of engagement with the *Figaro,* the conductor of the *Soleil,* a newly-established rival, offered him a thousand francs of a bonus, and sixty pounds a month, on a year's contract, for

two articles a week. He accepted. When the twelvemonth expired, Villemessant besought him to favour him by taking a bonus of three thousand francs and eighty pounds a month for the same amount of work. Rochefort was not proof against the temptation.

Gentlemen of the British press, do your teeth water? Was I not right in praising the French system of signed articles as an excellent thing?

With the amours and duels of Rochefort I have no concern. I shall not follow his example and probe into private life. As for the duels, French journalistic duels should hardly count; but there is an anecdote, connected with one of these "affairs of honour," which is so good that it will bear repeating. Rochefort was a second, and when he arrived on the ground with his man the enemy laid bare written excuses for his conduct instead of the customary rapier-blade. When he was off the ground his courage

returned. A few days afterwards, Rochefort met a fair friend of the weak-kneed champion on the Boulevards, and asked her how he had got on since his duel.

"Not too well," answered the lady; "he is still suffering somewhat."

"Poor fellow!" remarked the pitiless wit, "I suppose his apologies have re-opened."

While on the *Figaro*, Rochefort abandoned literary and dramatic criticism more and more for covert politics and personalities. Scandal was welcome, as it mostly is. Having coupled the name of Prince Achille Murat with that vulgar plain-faced demirep, the notorious Cora Pearl, groom's daughter by pedigree, the chronicler was called out. A duel with the unbuttoned foil was fought in a riding-school of Saint Germain, and Rochefort was scratched—usual result of a French duel. But he was compensated amply for that inconvenience by the prestige of having

crossed steel with a real prince, and the opportunity it afforded him of making one of those elaborately thought-out impromptus which are dear to Frenchmen.

"They are annoyed with me because I have the misfortune to measure myself with folk in clean linen, as if it were my fault that the rag-pickers don't challenge me. True," he added, after a pause, "I never attack the rag-pickers."

There is a proverb that those who live in glass houses should not throw stones. The austere censor of Prince Achille Murat dwelt in a veritable crystal palace; he, so severe in his animadversions on the lax morals of others, it was who scribbled to a popular air a string of prurient doggrel verses lacerating the Empress Eugénie. The lines commencing "*Amis du pouvoir,*" are an everlasting reproach to their author.

Villemessant was threatened with govern-

mental displeasure on account of the piquant outspokenness—the brutal frankness some might term it—of his contributor, and prevailed on Rochefort to devote himself to essays on the fine arts. The fat, open-handed speculator in intellect was such a thoroughly good fellow at bottom that the lean, cynic free-lance of the pen consented. But Rochefort was like the tiger which has tasted blood; he felt that he must fix his fangs in somebody. Ruminating over the mode and the means, he met his former colleague, Pierre Véron, and of a confabulation with him the idea of the *Lanterne* was conceived. The form of the new publication, a compact, thirty-two paged, red-covered pamphlet, was due to a suggestion of Emile de Girardin.

The *Lanterne* brought in its owner a weekly profit of some £400; each number attained a circulation of one hundred and twenty thousand copies. The eleventh and thirteenth numbers

were seized by the authorities; an aggregate of twenty-nine months' imprisonment and of fines to twenty thousand francs were imposed upon the temerarious pamphleteer, and Rochefort saw wisdom in flying to Belgium. But he continued to print his *Lanterne* on flimsy in Brussels—I used to buy it surreptitiously under the colonnade of the Odéon—and the sale was tremendous; the clandestine is always coveted. The Rue de Jérusalem, the French Scotland Yard, was puzzled to discover how the literary merchandise was smuggled over the border. At last, the secret transpired accidentally; the remorseless onslaughts on Imperialism found their way into the Empire packed in hollow busts of the Imperial family.

I have dwelt rather at length upon this theme for two reasons: first, because it gives a tolerably accurate insight into the prizes and trials of a journalistic career in Paris, and next because Rochefort was really a conspicuous per-

sonality of an epoch rich in historical events and remarkable actors therein. Personally, he was amiable, generous to prodigality to his companions, and absent-minded. He was one of those whose brains are winging in the clouds while their boots may be gathering slush in the gutters. They say that he was so forgetful that he went to Brébant's one evening in response to an invitation to dinner. On arriving, the name of his host had quite escaped him. He explained his dilemma to the landlord.

"There is but one way out of it," said the good-natured Brébant, "we must pass in review all the diners in the house; but as our visit might appear intrusive, put a napkin over your arm and come with me as my head-waiter."

The notion suited Rochefort down to the ground, and they made an inspection of all the cabinets and all the tables in the dining-room,

but in vain. Rochefort did not find his Amphitryon. Suddenly he slapped his forehead and exclaimed, "What an ass I am! The appointment was for Saturday last."

CHAPTER VIII.

A Popular Meeting under the Empire—The Ubiquitous French Policeman—Oratory under Difficulties—The Luckless Commissary—The Unhappy Chairman and his Owl-like Assessors—Mode of Procedure—Jean Baptiste Millière—Rochefort's Dramatic Entrance—His Maiden Speech—The Embrace of Fraternity.

THE person of a candidate for a seat in the Legislative Assembly is sacred in France, so that on the occurrence of a vacancy in Belleville, Rochefort seized the opportunity of returning from his expatriation and offered himself to the suffrages of those through whose veins coursed the blood warranted pure. A meeting to give him welcome was organised. I got wind of the intention and hied me to the neighbourhood on the off-chance of being admitted and of hearing

the famous pamphleteer make his maiden speech. I was in luck; and as this particular meeting was a fair sample of how all were conducted under the Empire, and affords a tolerably correct means of forming an idea of the amount of freedom of speech tolerated by what was called "the paternal despotism," I cannot do better than describe it.

The assembly was convoked for eight o'clock of a Saturday night in an obscure street of the first circumscription, a district on the northern outskirts of Paris, not far from the ill-famed American quarries. Number 4, Rue Doudeauville, was the address I copied; but it was not so easy to find out the locality. I took the omnibus to La Chapelle, and the conductor directed me to the *terra incognita*. There was a police-station in the Rue Doudeauville; that was reassuring, at all events, for a stranger in the wild region. I looked about for some time in the street to catch any

signs of a hall where a popular reunion was likely to be going on, but failed to light on them. I had some delicacy in asking an Imperialist policeman to direct me to what was undeniably an anti-Imperialist rendezvous, for this first circumscription prided itself on being the revolutionary one *par excellence,* and had elected Gambetta solely because he had made a violent attack on the Empire.

Its population even still is of the proletarian class; Proudhon's axiom that "property is robbery" is almost universally accepted, and though the horny-handed voters profess to be Republicans, I have a suspicion the accurate definition of their political creed would be "whatever is, is wrong."

At last I had to apply for information at the police-station, and was told that my ground was identically by the gateway next door and on to the courtyard beyond. A darksome, filthy, cut-

throat looking courtyard it was. There was a hum of voices and a glimmer of light from a building at the farthest side, which I at once recognised to be the *locale* of the meeting by the two *sergents de ville* posted at the entrance. In France, wherever there is a collection of people for any purpose, there will be the agents of authority; wherever there was a grouping of blouses at that period the sombre police uniform and the awful cocked-hat were conspicuous. I went over and fell into the *queue* that stood at the entrance, like those one can see any night outside the Comédie Française before the performance has begun. Every man was obliged to show his elector's card prior to admission. When it came to my turn, I was at once most politely made free of the assembly on presenting my credentials as journalist. Inside the door a man with a red tape tied round his left arm was seated at a table, on which was spread a heap of coppers, from which odd little

silver pieces shone out like mica in granite. This was the proceed of the collection for the expenses of the hall.

It was not easy to get a hall that would hold a couple of hundred persons comfortably. The organisers of the electoral reunions were forced to put up with a concert-room on the off-nights, or a gymnasium: sometimes they brought together their disciples on the tan of a riding-school, and I have actually been present at a gathering in a hot-house in the quarter of St. Jacques. In this instance the hall was nothing better than a half-finished workshop, with bare walls and earthen flooring; here and there lay heavy planks; the skeleton-posts of a future partition rose at intervals in the midst, and the window-spaces were blocked up with shutters bespattered with lime-wash. Flickering paraffin-lamps were fixed against the walls, and a couple of unmistakable dips, "eight to the pound," were stuck in pewter

candlesticks on the table set on the rude platform which had been thrown up for the President and the privileged at one side of the—well, barn is about the fittest name I can give it. The only approach to luxury visible was in a few cane-bottomed chairs disposed on this platform. But the assembly did not seem to take the inconvenience much to heart. It was principally composed of *ouvriers*, who had not doffed their blue or white blouses; their countenances were mottled with mortar-spots not rarely, and their general carriage was one of demonstratively democratic independence. Caps were worn and pipes were smoked; but perhaps this *sans-gêne* was partly to be accounted for by the fact that every one was obliged to stand up.

At spaces in the crowd were men of a better class, that is—to be more precise—better dressed; some of them, the reporters, were taking notes as best they could, no accommodation having

been provided for the press. There was one note-taker, however, who was favoured with a chair. This was the secretary of the Police Commissary, the Government reporter, who was imprisoning the rash words of speakers on his flimsy, with an eye to the possible future imprisonment of those who uttered them.

The Police Commissary, under the Republic as the Empire, is a point in all electoral meetings; he is the spectre at the banquet, the slave who stands behind the car of political triumph, and whispers now and again to the recipient of popular applause that he is but mortal, and that the Jupiter of authority is at hand to cut the thread of his rhetoric. I pitied this poor Police Commissary sitting up there, cinctured with his tricoloured scarf, listening with ears wide open, and eyes most frequently shut, to diatribes against all he held sacred, and to attacks, open or covert, upon the power that helped him to his bread

and butter. Can you fancy a less congenial position for a respectable father of a family who ought to have been at the moment helping Madame Prudhomme to entertain her visitors, or "coaching" little Jules, the hope of the house, in his Phædrus for the next lesson in the College Sainte Barbe? There he sat, like Patience on a monument—but, no, he did not smile; he woke up visibly, for he was wide-awake mentally all through, to give a warning to some perspiring orator who desired to demolish the personal power, or to have the assassins of Baudin guillotined in the gray of the morrow's dawn. There he sat and rose but to be hooted and jeered, opened his mouth in the tumult of sound but to be howled down with a manifold, many-throated will by the many-headed. I pitied him. But he wore the tricoloured scarf, and away there outside the door, over the heads of the surging crowd, glistened the silvered band on the

cap of the lynx-like police inspector. A beck from the Commissary, and a force of agents springs up, as if by magic, and quells disorder by the strong arm, or, if need be, by the shining steel. As I thought of that I ceased to pity him.

But it is time that business should begin. Where is the Chairman? His election takes place by noisy acclamation, not by formal proposing and seconding of a resolution, and is the first item in the programme. From every corner names are shouted out, generally of some implacable enemy of the dynasty, in exile for his advanced opinions, perhaps some leader who had carried a musket on the boulevards or been roused up from his first sleep to be trundled into the prison-van on a certain December night. In many cases choice is made of an honorary president, or two even, from this category, while the actual Chairman, as on the occasion

I describe, is editor of some Radical paper who happens to be in attendance.

His name, I now recall, was Vermorel. He lived to be accused as a Bonapartist spy by the fickle mob, and to confound his accusers by dying on a barricade.

The not-to-be-envied Chairman mounts the platform, and shows himself beside the unhappy Commissary and behind the inelegant dip, amid salvos of cheers. A decanter of water (filtered, I trust, for the Paris water is not as pure as that from Horeb) and a couple of glasses are at his hand. The provision is not superfluous, for he is apt to have much need to moisten his throat before the thing is over, if he is to keep that rowdy gathering in check. But has he no traditional gavel or gong to enjoin order? A little bell is there, such a bell as parlour-boarders might use to call up the maid-of-all-work in genteel lodgings in Camberwell; but its feeble

tinklings can scarcely be expected to cope with the hurricane of human sound here. After his induction to the presidency the next proceeding is to elect in the same tumultuous way three Assessors who sit beside him, but whose exact line of duty I have never been able to ascertain. They look wise, and now and again, when there is an unusual hubbub, stand up, scream and gesticulate in a mesmeric manner, striving to restore order by the paradoxical process of creating a noise. The elector who is ambitious of oratorical honours writes his name and address on a slip of paper and is summoned to the platform in his turn, where he usually speaks until he is warned by the Commissary, snubbed into silence (very difficult that) by the Chairman for not keeping to the question, or yelled away by his wearied auditors. The stuff that goes down with the Paris workman must be highly flavoured, but I have remarked that even in the most revolutionary

quarters he is fairly open to reason and always accessible to humour. When a speaker, however strong his Socialism (which is the trump card with the orators of the clubs), gets prosy or stammers, he is smothered under an unmerciful weight of derisive hisses. Most of the speakers have a blundering manner, begin with a few well-rounded cut-and-dry sentences, and then bog, or go off into vague vapours of theory; but some amongst them talk with a marvellous ease, exhibit both tact and spirit, and watch their listeners much as a skilful jockey who is careful that his horse is not winded or does not break out of his pace.

The speaker of the night is one Jean Baptiste Millière—remember his name, for we shall meet him again—an elderly man of placid bearing and suave voice, who could urge the most desperate doctrines in gentlest of tones, a philosophic fanatic. His manner is calm, his sentences well balanced

and distinctly enunciated; his face as he speaks has in it something of inspiration, suggested partly by the flaming eyes, partly by the prophet-like fashion of wearing his locks long and brushed back from his forehead. There was a tinge of melancholy in his appearance. Could it be that the ill-starred agitator was clouded over by presentiment of the horrid destiny that awaited him?

Rochefort effects his entrance dramatically by a window. The shutter is removed under the pretence that this is the readiest, indeed, the only way to penetrate the place, because of the throng and the excitement. But there is a meaning in the device which the Commissary can perceive, only he does not consider it prudent to notice it. This is a hint that Rochefort is of those who could enter elsewhere by the window, if denied at the door. He is awkward, well-dressed, and not handsome. On the whole, he impresses me

unfavourably. But for the goatee on his chin, if I met him in London anywhere in the vicinity of Sadler's Wells or the Surrey Theatre, I should take him rather for the villain of last night's melodrama than for a nobleman who had been transformed into tribune of the people.

But to return to our meeting. The assembly is cheering all this time with more of a real enthusiasm than one usually hears in assemblies of Frenchmen. Rochefort, who is naturally affected by his reception, is white as a sheet of paper and positively trembles with emotion. His voice is dry and thin; he is evidently unaccustomed to confronting a sea of faces. Occasionally he pauses as if collecting his thoughts, and carries his hand to his goatee, which he caresses, or rubs his palms together with an affectation of self-possession. But though the man is no orator, as Gambetta, his predecessor, was, his manner is sincere—for this once,

at all events — and wins its way with the blouses.

When Rochefort ceased speaking—his speech had been more of a half-hysterical murmur than anything else, the speech of a man with highly-strung nerves, who was wound up to his utmost pitch of tension — the philosophic Millière approached him and took him to his embrace.

"This is the first time I have met the bold young champion of the democracy, my friends," he said, pushing back his long locks from his forehead, "though I have wished it for long. I like him, and I believe in him"; and he repeated the embrace, and the stout *plebs* of Belleville roared with delight at the affecting scene. Different countries, different manners!

Rochefort was twice warned by the Commissary, which did not detract from his success; but with the causes of that interference or the principles he ventilated, I have nothing to do here. I

have simply endeavoured to rough-sketch the meeting at which he appeared for the first time as a speaker, as a sort of specimen of its class; not the less so, that although warnings were frequent, a dissolution of the assembly had not to be pronounced. When this course is deemed necessary by the Commissary he quietly declares so, and if he chooses to hear out the persons who do not choose to hear him, he disinvests himself of his scarf, and is "not present," by a legal fiction. Fines of three hundred francs or fifteen days' imprisonment were often inflicted on the Chairman, Assessors, and speakers, in cases where meetings were persevered in after they had been dissolved by the representative of the authority, and in no case could they be prolonged after eleven o'clock. This latter was a rule, which, I submit, might be adopted with good results in more constitutional countries.

CHAPTER IX.

The Irish College—An Ecclesiastical Grievance—Carnival with Empty Pockets — Horn-Music—The Worship of the Beast—Cavalcade of the Fat Oxen—Three Days of Torture—The Imperial Family receives the Rabble —Invitation to a Masquerade—Suicide—Troppmann the Champion Murderer—Treatment in the Condemned Cell—The Guillotine at Work.

One would imagine that we of the Irish colony paid frequent visits to the Irish College in the Rue des Irlandais. We went there very seldom, although it was quite close to the Panthéon; and I must own I do not think the superiors esteemed our absence an inconsolable loss. This establishment was founded by the benefactions of rich Irishmen under the Bourbons, that is, when those unwise penal enactments prevailed in Ireland under which the members of the popular

creed had not the advantage of a Maynooth at their door for the home manufacture of priests. Then there was a real necessity for it, now it is without a *raison d'être.* A committee selected from the Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland controls its management, and the fathers of the Vincentian Order are entrusted with the direction of the teaching and internal economy. There are usually about one hundred and fifty youths within its walls; they come from all parts of the Emerald Isle, obtaining their burses by *concursus,* and as soon as they have finished their course they are distributed over their native land. Those Irish clerical students know little of Paris, they are *in* it not *of* it, yet by some phenomenon beyond my comprehension they seem to acquire a polish from the mere fact of breathing the Paris atmosphere for five years. The college has a grievance. From 1587, when it was founded, until 1789, when ecclesiastical

property was confiscated, what it held was regarded as of British ownership. As such the head of the college claimed exemption from the decree of the Revolutionists, and his claim was allowed until the Reign of Terror. Then the professors were arrested, but they were treated as British subjects and sent home under the convention of 1801. At the peace of 1814, a petition for compensation for the robberies to which it had been subjected was sent in to the ruling power with the support of the British Government, was considered—the consideration only took eleven years—and was rejected in the November of 1825. The generous French nation can be grudging when it likes. Why Irishmen should be particularly drawn towards it to me is a puzzle. In all that I have seen of it the guiding principle is the love not of humanity but of self. There are exceptions, but the ordinary Frenchman—the Legitimists and the advanced Revolu-

tionists, both parties with ideas, put aside—is as watchful of his own interests to the exclusion of those of all others as any man I know. When the Irish College realises its money I should advise it to clear out. There will always be recklessness and revolt in Paris, and the feelings towards ecclesiastics, native and foreign, are not likely to grow more affectionate.

Leaving the troublous field of politics for awhile, I will ask the reader to pardon me if I give him a curious experience of the gay, as distinguished from the evil-hearted city, from my recollections, that of the last Carnival worthy of the name; the period when

> The people take their fill of recreation,
> And buy repentance ere they grow devout,
> However high their rank, or low their station,
> With fiddling, feasting, dancing, drinking, masking.

The reminiscence will serve to show the Empire in one of those frivolous moods it took

such care to encourage and cultivate. Carnival is a decayed festival now, but it flourished then. Early in the morning of the 23rd of February, I woke to the braying of a horn and the fact that it was in upon us. It is supposed to exist in a quiet sort of way from Christmas, but it is only in the seventy-two hours which immediately precede Ash Wednesday that it forces its existence upon the world in a noisy sort of way. Then, it literally blows its own trumpet. Paris is revolutionised, and suffers the penalty of another "three glorious days."

From roof to roadway during this noisy epoch the patron of horn-music (Triton, since he is represented puffing into a conch) rules supreme. All the instruments under his protection are brought into requisition. French horns, cowhorns, saxhorns, horns of chase, horns involuting and convoluting like boa-constrictors, horns which seem to have started with the intention of

elongating themselves into trombones, but altered their minds *en route,* horns with a noise like a baby's squeak, horns with a bellow like a hoarse bull, horns of every conceivable and many inconceivable descriptions are disinterred and furbished up, and join in a deliberate conspiracy to break the peace. Paris delivers itself to a delirium of discord for the nonce. To perpetrate a wretched classic pun—*Fœnum habet in cornu.*

The braying of a horn woke me not only to the fact that it was full Carnival, but to the additional fact (which I could have pretermitted) that I had no money to enjoy it. Here, then, I was confronted by viler horns than any yet —the horns of a dilemma. Well, I thought, I shall even go out and study Carnival with empty pockets and take cynical notes of what I see. That will be something original.

The great feature in Imperial Paris—go back with me to 1868—was the procession of the

bœufs gras, or fat oxen. As this is the residuum of a Pagan custom in honour of Bacchus, the god of eating and drinking, it is only fitting that a Christian city should adopt it as a preparation for Christian penitence. And as fat cattle are reared and pampered with the ultimate object of being slaughtered and eaten, and the *bœufs gras* cannot possibly be killed before the morn of Ash Wednesday, the likelihood is that their honoured suet is consumed in the very opening days of Lent — which I respectfully submit is yet another instructive theme for Christian meditation.

On the 11th of February there had been an exhibition of overgrown cattle at the market of La Villette, when a jury of butchers decided to what beasts the palm of pinguidity should be awarded. Normandy generally carries off the distinction of raising these sovereigns of the bovine race on its lush pastures. In 1868 the

honour fell to the Nivernais, and the winner of the first prize illustrated its birthplace in its name, *la Nièvre.* It weighed 1,361 kilos.; but the winner of the second prize was weightier still, thereby proving that quality is taken into account as well as quantity. It turned the scale at 1,480, and rejoiced in the appellation of *le Lutteur Masqué,* its sponsor being a renowned wrestler, who had been mystifying us by overthrowing all comers in the athletic arena, and persisting, in spite of the provocations of glory, in concealing his identity under a black mask. The holder of third honours was named *Mignon,* after a piece in vogue at the Opéra Comique; and the fourth on the list took for foster-father, *Paul Forestier,* the hero of a highly successful and audaciously indelicate drama of Emile Augier.

There is a lively competition among the victuallers of the city for the purchase of the prize beasts. The happy man on this occasion was

Duval, the proprietor of the economic dining-rooms, or *établissements de bouillon.* Bannerets of every colour, white and green, pink and purple, fluttered from the windows of his eating-houses throughout the town; shields were raised over their entrances, with the inscription: "*Bœufs gras,* 1868, *Duval, Acquéreur,*" and heavy gonfalons of crimson and orange, spangled with gilt stars, drooped lazily from tall masts planted in the pavement outside. It was a big advertisement for M. Duval, the purchase of the fat oxen that were paraded over Paris during the three glorious days. The hungry multitude went to him to eat, and he had the privilege of selling the worst meat out with impunity for the following six months. Nobody would dare to insinuate that the *acquéreur* of the fat oxen could serve indifferent cates on his tables. And this immunity from hostile criticism must pay well, since an outlay of six

thousand pounds could be incurred on the traditional cavalcade.

I made my way to the Palais d'Industrie, from which the procession was announced to start at half-past nine a.m. precisely, which meant one minute after eleven. A lane of sightseers awaited the spectacle.

Three trumpeters of the mounted municipal guard, on gray horses, trotted forward, and took their places as *avant-garde* of the *cortége*. They were followed by a demi-troop of their comrades on black horses, who served as escort. A mass of black-coated *sergents de ville* closed up about the building. A roll of drums! A prancing cavalier in the costume of Francis I. made his appearance from the palace gate. It was the Grand Marshal of the procession; he was attended by a trumpeter and two aides-de-camp, all mounted. After him advanced on a piebald steed, a hussar of the First Empire,

bearing aloft a brilliant oriflamme with the Imperial eagle, and the legend, France. The loftiest, and leanest of lofty and lean drum-majors stepped out jauntily next, tossing his head under his cocked hat, swelling his meagre bosom under his broidered jerkin, whirling his long, massive, gold-tipped cane in mid-air. He directed the movements of a corps of forty drummers, dressed in the scarlet uniform of the ancient Swiss of the guard, gaiters, double-breasted coat, buckskin breeches, shako widening at the top. The drummers were succeeded by a brass band and forty soldiers, in costumes of the same period. Then a chariot, drawn by three cream-coloured ponies abreast, whose reins were held by a buxom female in the garment popularly attributed to heathen goddesses, that is to say, in a dressing-gown, with one end draped over her shoulder, like the mantle of a Polytechnic student. That was the "Genius of

France"; its march was escorted by a group of butcher-boys disguised as Gaulish warriors, and sitting very uncomfortably on horseback.

Next, a huge four-horsed waggon bore one of the fat oxen. The poor beast was flanked by four attendants, representing sacrificatory priests, and tied down to its place by the horns. It did not seem to like the glory which was forced on it, nor indeed to understand it. Nor would its discontent be lessened if it did understand it, for was it not in the position of the condemned malefactor who joins in his own funeral procession? A cheer saluted the fat ox No. 1. The cheer was drowned in a fanfare from a knot of cavalry-trumpeters who followed, "got up" in the apparel of times mediæval. It seemed to me I recognised among their instruments some of very modern make. A huge wain, supporting a scene-painter's idea of the American Continent, followed: that is to say, a green rock, with palms growing out of it. On the summit

of the rock, a lightly-clad, broken-nosed lady, cradled in a hammock, swung from two trees, an attendant Red Indian watching over her with a fan. The Red Indians in Cooper's novels, I may remark *en passant,* do not affect fans. America was escorted by a squadron of Mexicans and a band of wild warriors, bald as to the head except the black scalp-lock which hung like John Chinaman's pig-tail along their backs.

Next in the panorama came ox No. 2, attended by an escort dressed as farm-servants; and then the car of Africa, with a crowd of (City) Arabs, armed with swords of lath, to accompany it. A sphinx, an Egyptian arch, a bull in caoutchouc with gilt horns, and a bevy of yellow-faced females did duty for the Dark Continent, and behind them came another brass band, in a four-horsed carriage, "the car of the savages," the performers in which gave the public *their* interpretation of savage music by playing out of tune and time in the most

abandoned manner. Asia, figured by an elephant of wood, surmounted by a palanquin, containing a princess, in a costume which was apt to lead untravelled spectators into the belief that the royal families of Hindoostan are attired like short-skirted ballet girls, was a grand succeeding feature in the pageant. Asia had for escort a number of Tartars and Chinese—"Chinois des Batignolles," an ironical *gamin* remarked.

Then was led along, garlanded with flowers, like a lamb to the sacrifice, ox No. 3, after which pranced a helmeted century of the knightly order of old. Rome, bearing spears and bucklers and escutcheons, with the device "S. P. Q. R." and serving as suitable heralds to the immense chariot of Olympus. It was chokefull of gods and goddesses (Mars and Venus and Minerva, and a little shivering Cupid at five francs each for the job)—an edition of Keightley's Mythology on wheels. As a proper mark of dis-

tinction to the deities, their waggon had a team of six horses instead of four.

To the gods succeeded the last of the victim oxen, and the last of the symbolic wains—that typifying Industry. It bore an aged husbandman, with a respectable allowance of family and farm-servants, implements of husbandry, and specimens of the produce of France in vines and corn and fruit. Four young ladies ambled beside it, and were presumed to represent the seasons, though, whimsically enough, Summer, in a thin robe of virgin white, suffered from a severe cold and incessantly blew her nose; and Winter, in a thick snow-spotted mantle, intended to give the idea of frigidity, looked ruddy and warm. To the seasons succeeded the majestic mounted municipals, and the ubiquitous sombre *sergents de ville.*

Such was the procession of the *bœufs gras,* which Paris during three days rushed to see,

which moved through the town from club to embassy, from the ministries to the senate, even to the Tuileries itself, amid music and acclamation. A burlesque, no doubt, but a pretext for saturnalia, and that was enough—it served its purpose.

After it had passed I returned home, shut myself in my room, and took down a book to read. It was the "Reisebilder" of Henry Heine, and, as luck would have it, the first passage I lit on was this sentence, in the ideas of the drummer Legrand: "The philosopher Pangloss was right—it is the best of possible worlds; but one must have money in this best of possible worlds, money in his pockets and not manuscripts in his drawer." The blast of a horn of chase, on which a joyous student was expending his lungs in the effort to get out "Malbrook s'en va-t-en guerre," burst in on my reveries and annihilated my philosophy. It was Carnival, and my pockets were empty. I commenced pacing

the room like a hyena in a cage, and finally took an opiate and went to bed, so striving to bring to a premature close the miseries of the day.

On the second morning, I was awakened from a delicious sleep by the same horrid tuneless horn-blowing. I rose and looked out of the window. To my joy, a Scotch mist had dropped into Paris for the day. A happy thought (apologies to Mr. Burnand) struck me; my watch-case was on the dressing-table; I plucked the wool out of it, and stuffed it into my ears. To bed again, as Samuel Pepys might remark. Another happy thought struck me. Shall call my narrative of the procession of the fat oxen "The Worship of the Beast." Shall call the fattest of the fat oxen, the principal offender, "Daniel Lambert." I was relieved by these thoughts. Jules, the domestic in dirty apron, who skated over the bees-waxed flooring of our rooms in a pair of polishing brushes, kindly ran

in to communicate to me the interesting information that the procession would pass under my balcony. The result of this intimation was that I hurried on my habiliments and dashed forth frantically, never stopping until I reached the wall pasted over with play-bills, in the remote street behind the Institute. The first to confront me was that of the Théâtre Déjazet, where they were performing "Carnaval Vit Encore." This was Nemesis—a bestial Nemesis. Furiously I bent home, and gave myself up to bed again, and the stupefying solace of another opiate.

On the third morning, I woke with an *evoe* on my lips, for my woes were approaching their term. The weather was provokingly fine; there was balm in the atmosphere, and I resolved to take a long walk into the fresh country. Scarcely had I started, rejoicing in my artificial deafness as the sun glistened on the brass instruments of torture at every step, when I encountered that

irrepressible cavalcade in the Rue de Rivoli, and was carried along by the crowd, which pressed in its train, into the precincts of the Tuileries. The Court of Honour was thrown open to the breechless and unwashed "for this occasion only;" the drums beat a long roll, and the Imperial family stood out behind the high stone balustrade over the central pavilion of the palace. To the right stooped Louis Napoléon, carefully shaved and powdered, except as to his heavy beard and moustachios stiffly cosmetised; there was worry and weariness in his sallow, impassive features, and his keen small eyes were lustreless; he was attired neatly and quietly in a plain black frock-coat, and kept his hat continuously in his hand in almost nervous acknowledgment of the infrequent salutes of the populace. It is not always pleasurable to wear the purple, and, assuredly, this wearer of the purple was not to be envied, if his face were index of his feelings. It was as if the buoyancy

had gone out of his heart and frame; he had that air of compliant dejection which sometimes settles on those who realise, in the homely phrase, that they are breaking up fast. And yet he survived for nearly five years. Perhaps he was on the eve of, or barely recovered from, an attack of that painful and wasting malady to which he was such a martyr in the latter years of his life. The Prince Imperial, a slim, comely boy, with young vivacity, stirred up by the scene, brightening the natural delicacy of his complexion, stood between his father and the Empress, and doffed his red-banded collegian's cap in answer to the compliments of the staring crowd underneath. Eugénie, pensively gracious in manner and graceful in figure, still beautiful if somewhat *passée*, a heightened colour showing itself on her clear pale cheeks, divided her attention between her son and the spectacle: as I gazed at her, it would suggest itself

that her most suiting flower would be a faded white rose.

The caoutchouc elephant on the car of Africa was set free, and majestically ascended until it turned topsy-turvy sky-high, to the glee of the Prince Impérial, and faded away in the far spaces of cloud-land. It was a grotesque apotheosis of the *bœufs gras*. A parting shout of "Vive l'Empereur," and the crowd streamed out under the arch of triumph, which was the chief entrance of the Court of Honour, past the pair of immobile cuirassiers, who sat sentry, like equestrian statues, in the niches at either side.

On my return from this unexpected peep at the reigning household, I was met by a young French friend who was not an Imperialist—not much of a politician at all. But he was happy. He was bubbling over with anticipation of the joys of the masquerade at the Châtelet.

"Will you not come? A quadrille by the

celebrities of the quarter" (the students' quarter naturally), "Pipe-en-Bois, Raoul Rigault and the rest; a concert of horns of chase on the terrace at two in the morning; costumes—I only say that." And he kissed his finger-tips, whiffing the smack from him. "Fancy Charlotte Corday for your partner, the Postilion of Longjumeau and Mary Queen of Scots for opposite couple. Orchestra quick, resonant—piff, paff — advance, retire, crash, bang—galop all round, superb!"

I respectfully declined, had my walk, dined, blew away a cigar, read a few pages of Heine, buried myself in bed and dreamt of a lightning-lit thicket, through whose glades demons in red and black dominoes were waltzing with infernal frenzy to the satanic blasts of ten thousand huntsmen, all of whom answered to the name of Herne.

The next was the morning of Ash Wednesday. As I opened my eyes and ears—there was no

longer need to stuff the latter—a vision shaped itself before me, a vision based on a picture I had seen somewhere. It was that of a girl sicklied o'er with the saffron cast of debauchery, eyes drooping like the blossoms in her tangled hair, creeping softly, in a languid, shamefaced way, in her satin slippers, up to bed, while a Sister of Mercy, meek and fresh-faced, though she had been watching by the pallet of a sick child, descended the same staircase, gilt-edged prayer-book in hand, to her early devotions. I could not drive away the vision, the probable sequel of the opiates, until I sallied out for a quick tramp by the side of the Seine.

I met my young French friend who had tried to persuade me to accompany him to the Châtelet. He was tired, pale, excited.

"I cannot sleep," he said, taking my arm, "I am walking for repose."

"Why so excited?"

"Not without cause—most horrid cause. Henri," alluding to another friend, "escorted two of our partners of last night's revels to the door of their lodgings in the Boulevard de Villette a few hours ago, just as dawn was streaking the sky. We hardly turned our heels after the adieux, when there was a shriek and a thud; one of them had flung herself from a third-storey window, and fell, a misshapen mass, on the asphalte. Death must have been instantaneous. There had been no quarrel. Where could I get a glass—two glasses—of absinthe? I do not feel myself."

And I began to think after all that it was fortunate I was obliged to spend my Carnival with empty pockets.

Thus suicide sometimes followed on the dancing-pumps of pleasure, and slides of horror, of woe, and of mournfulness came in quick succession behind those of luxury and rejoicing in this phantasmagoric Paris.

I have already made a reference to the appalling crimes of Troppmann. They were perpetrated in a field at Pantin just outside the fortifications to the north-east side. A family disappeared, the bodies of some of the children were dug up, and the awful suspicion was entertained that they had fallen by the hand of their own father, until his remains were discovered embedded in the soil at a few paces from the unconsecrated burial-pits of his offspring. I do not care to enter into the morbid particulars. The wretched criminal, on whose very shadow the brand of Cain was stamped, was arrested at Havre; he plunged into the basin by the quay, but was rescued by a sailor, who fancied he was acquitting himself of a charitable act. Rescued from drowning to have his head chopped off by the guillotine! This Troppmann was tried at Paris, found guilty, and sentenced to death. An avaricious ruffian, of brutal type of countenance

—truculent, treacherous, greedy, semi-animal, with low forehead, abnormal backhead, and ape-arms preternaturally long, with claw-like fingers. What a fascination the details of his atrocities did exercise, and how eagerly the blotchy little halfpenny sheets, containing blurred woodcuts of the scene of the tragedy, portraits of the victims, and of the assassin, with anecdotes of his career, were snapped up! My first engagement on a London daily paper was to write an account of his execution. I could not afford to decline it, though if there be one duty of my profession I would shirk, this was the duty.

In my infancy in Ireland, I was carried by a foolish nurse to witness what she looked upon as a treat—the hanging of a human being. To this day, the recollection of the sight makes me shudder. I can conjure up the appearance of a pale man on a trap with iron railings around in front of a jail, the priest in his vestments, the

executioner in black crape mask, the adjustment of the white cap, the fixing of the noose, the fall of the body, and the moan of sympathy which broke from a multitude of peasants, who dropped on their knees, and began murmuring prayers for the dying. As the body swayed in the morning sunshine, a butterfly hovered round the head quivering from side to side; the right hand struck the breast once or twice as well as the pinions would permit, the limbs shook, and at last the butterfly lit on the white cap. I had convulsions for weeks after the event. The innocence of that man was subsequently made clear by the confession of the real murderer, and never since have I been able to shake off a strong repugnance to the death penalty.

Troppmann was not innocent. If ever miscreant deserved to die he did. Still, when the fatal moment which I had been waiting for night after night, which I had been specially

commissioned to describe, arrived, I could not master myself; as the knife was about to fall I shut my eyes.

In France, by a refinement of judicial cruelty, the date of execution is not known until the previous evening. The criminal himself does not know it until the last morning dawns for him; all he is certain of is that it will not fall on a Friday, there being an old-fashioned objection to having death sentences carried out on the day of the week assigned to the crucifixion. When the eve of the fatal morn arrives notices are sent to the governor of the jail, the executioner, and the chaplain respectively. From the hour of his sentence the criminal is dead to the world. Environed by guards, he is taken to a cell with two beds, one of which is occupied by a fellow-captive of the class known as *mouton* (prison spy). Here his clothes are taken off, and he is put into a suit consisting of rough

canvas shirt, woollen trousers, and felt shoes. No cravat is allowed lest he should strangle himself. A strait-waistcoat of canvas, opening behind, and secured with leather straps, is fixed over this suit, and the long sleeves are attached to a cord which passes round the thighs, so that he cannot lift his hands beyond a certain height, and is almost helpless to perform the most ordinary movement. His food is taken with a wooden spoon. A warder and a gendarme, both unarmed, who are relieved every two hours, keep perpetual watch over him. He may sleep, or smoke, or eat when he chooses, but visitors from outside are not admitted; tidings from outside do not enter. His solitary exercise is perambulating a corridor round a lilac-plot!

When the last sun sets for him, the executioner and his assistants about midnight drive up in two carts to the Place de la Roquette, a dismal square bounded by high jail walls, with a line

of dwarf trees at one side. The first cart contains the *bois de justice,* the apparatus of death; the other a rough receptacle which comes empty, but will go away full. The red timbers of the guillotine are raised some fifteen paces in front of the prison gate—raised almost noiselessly, no hammers being used, but every part being screwed into its place. By the light of a couple of lanterns, the knife of the guillotine is fixed into the grooves, and the executioner makes his experiment to ascertain that it runs smoothly. By-and-by the spectators increase: the riff-raff are there, the amateurs of the sensational, some journalists, and—shame to relate—a party of youthful dandies with the be-rouged accomplices in their debauches. Order is kept by the police; but later tramp up the municipal guards and clatter up the splendid gendarmes of the Seine, massive troopers in bearskins, like the Scots Greys, and form an enclosure round the machine of reprisal.

The executioner on this occasion was Hendreich. He did not prepare himself for his work on beer and horehound like a certain British hangman; his peculiarity was to make a meal off rusks and new milk before approaching his dreadful task. The peculiarity of his successor Roch, was to supervise the proceedings without removing his tall, shiny, silk hat. Monsieur de Paris, as he is called, has higher emoluments than his English colleagues. He receives nine thousand francs a year from the State for expenses and four thousand for salary.

As the dawn approaches and the gas over the jail-gate waxes yellow in the advance shafts of day, the chaplain drives up in a cab and enters, and such sinister adjuncts of the function as buckets of water, bran, and the zinc bath-like case to receive the head, become visible. Hendreich enters after the chaplain.

The hour is at hand.

The gates fly open and the procession appears. The felon, with hair cropped and naked to below the neck, still in the strait-waistcoat, hobbles along: at the foot of the ascent to the guillotine the chaplain kisses him on the left cheek, Hendreich supports him under the right armpit, an assistant under the left, another presses from behind. A fourth stands by an upright plank which rises to the level of the felon's breast-bone. As he reaches it, he is pushed and falls on his stomach to the plank which is shot rapidly forward until his neck falls into a semi-circular hollow under the knife; the upper part which completes the circle is dropped, Hendreich touches a lever, the blade flashes downward, the head jumps into the zinc case, the body is turned over into the tumbril, the head being shaken from its couch of blood-dabbled bran alongside it. All is over. There is no senseless formality of inquest. The severed remains are galloped off to the Turnip

Field, as the degraded cemetery at Clamart is called, there to be buried, the head between the legs, beside the paupers from the hospitals, and the unclaimed unfortunates from the Morgue who have not been presented to the surgeons.

CHAPTER X.

Pierre Bonaparte: His Unquiet Youth—Adventures in America—Return to Italy—The Coming Cæsar in a Street Brawl—An Unemployed Sword—An Emperor's Nephew named a Republican Representative—The Siege of Zaatcha—The Licence of Caricature in Paris—*Figaro's* Great Hoax—Defiances and Counter Defiances—Napoléon the Third's Black Monday—The Slaying of Victor Noir—A Riotous Interment—Summoned to London—Special Correspondent at Last.

At Auteuil, in the environs of Paris, dwelt a Bonaparte, son of Lucien, and nephew of the great Emperor, who was never seen at Court. His house was spacious, but modestly furnished; its principal apartment was fitted up as a fencing-saloon, for this Bonaparte, Pierre Napoléon by Christian name, was a fighter by race and by

instinct, a full-blooded Corsican, and took his greatest pleasure in collecting and comparing arms. His hobby was sword-play, as that of some English gentlemen is boxing or pigeon-shooting. He was adroit at cut, point, and parry; had published a tract entitled "Le Maniement de l'Epée réduit à sa plus simple expression utile;" and one of his most assiduous visitors was M. Paul de Cassagnac, the noted duellist of the Press.

His Highness was born at Rome some four months after Waterloo had been fought. In his youth he was brought up at Canino, in the Maremma, the residence of his family, where he seems to have acquired irrepressible sympathies for Young Italy. Nevertheless, his first preceptors were ecclesiastics, the Abbé Casanova and the Rev. Father Maurice of Brescia, the latter of whom had been recommended for the post by His Holiness Pius VII. When the

movement of revolt broke out in 1831, the lad disappeared from the paternal roof and bent his way to Tuscany to join the camp of the insurgents. He was arrested by the police before he arrived at his destination, and conducted to Leghorn, where he was lodged in the fort for six months. He had a view of the island of Elba from his place of detention. That view must have chafed the prisoner — may have filled him with stern ambitions and visionary hopes. He was restored to his friends when things had quieted down, but on intimating his desire to return home was informed that the Pope-King had debarred him admission at his frontiers. In this difficulty he made up his mind to go to the United States, and took passage in an American brig for New York, where he arrived after a stormy voyage of fifty-six days. He did not stop long in the Empire City, but hastened to join his uncle

Joseph (a dethroned king), who was living at Point Breeze, on the Delaware, towards Philadelphia.

General Santander was one of the intimates of Joseph, and as he was the President-elect of the States of New Granada, he was enabled to grant the young Bonaparte a commission as Chief of Squadron in the army then struggling for independence against the Spanish dominance. This was in the July of 1832, and the Prince acted as aide-de-camp to the General at Barranquilla, Carthagena and Mahates, penetrated to the foot of the Cordilleras, and entered Santa Fé de Bogota victoriously by his side. Santander wished to retain him, but the restless Pierre Bonaparte retraced his steps to New York, where he landed in the opening of 1833. He received two letters at that port, one announcing the premature death of the King of Rome, the other from his father, counselling him to remain

in the service of Colombia until "Providence restored a Republican Government to France." After a sojourn of a few months at New York, he returned to Italy, where the Pope authorised him to take up his residence at Canino with his brother, Prince Anthony. Here he spent two years tranquilly, dabbling in verse-making, for which he always had a fondness, and devoting himself to the chase.

Letitia Bonaparte, "the mother of kings," died in 1836 in the arms of Cardinal Fesch; and Gregory XVI., conceiving, rightly or wrongly, that Pierre Bonaparte was a dangerous person and probably an affiliated of the Carbonari, cast him into the Castle of St. Angelo, where he had an opportunity of cultivating the Muses, by the faintly-heard plash of the Tiber. On the 7th of February, after a captivity of over nine months, he was liberated and proceeded to New York again, where he met two princes

of his kindred — Louis Napoléon and Lucien Murat.

No apology is offered for entering into these minutiæ. Aught that concerns the family of Bonaparte is interesting from the fact alone, for it concerns history. And nowhere, not in the most fantastic domains of fiction, have more startling vicissitudes been invented by the romancer than mark the authentic and most stupendous rise and fall of this meteoric house.

The Bonapartes chummed, and might have often been met strolling arm-in-arm on the Broadway, he who was afterwards to become an Emperor and die in exile telling, perhaps, of his mad adventure at Strasbourg, or indulging in his fatalistic day-dreams of the future. During this term of indolent exile, an event occurred, petty in itself, but important because of those who shared in it. The cousins were quietly promenading in a retired street, when Prince Louis was rudely pushed against by a

set of well-dressed blackguards in an advanced stage of intoxication. Instead of apologising for their conduct, one of them made use of threats, when the fiery Pierre Bonaparte, who was as strong as he was hot-tempered, felled him with a well-directed blow of his walking-stick. The Bonapartes were immediately arrested and brought before a magistrate, who bound them over to keep the peace. As Prince Louis gave the name of a near relation of a former President as his bail, no more was heard of the matter.

It was a wayward turn of the whirligig of time, that a nephew and another, the successor of the modern Cæsar, he whose fame had filled the round world for years, whose voice had shaken nations, and who had made Emperors his foot-stools, should be haled before a Republican functionary — a possibly promoted keeper of a *lager-bier* saloon—like a pair of common rowdies in a street brawl.

A few days afterwards, in the course of one of their perambulations, the cousins passed a money-changer's shop. In the window there was the inscription, "Napoleons wanted here for sovereigns." The son of Queen Hortense smiled a sly smile, and remarked: "That would suit me exactly."

Pierre came back to England, where his uncle Joseph was living, and after a few months visited the Ionian Isles. He resided a while at Corfu, but had to leave it, as he had shot a couple of peasants he suspected to be brigands on the opposite coast of Albania. Next, we find him at Malta, where he made a tour of the cholera hospitals, and shook hands with the worst patients after the manner of his uncle at Jaffa, and afterwards in Belgium, where he had secured a shooting-box in the Ardennes. But he rebelled against inaction, and in rotation offered his sword to Belgium (which was not at war), to France,

which had an Algerian campaign on hand, to Espartero of Spain, and to the Czar Nicholas. Rejected by the Cross, Latin and Greek, he turned to the Crescent. His services were accepted by the Viceroy of Egypt, but to be courteously declined almost before the ink was dry on his commission.

In 1846, he was allowed to visit France for the first time to see his mother, but he seized the chance of making pilgrimage to the tomb of the Invalides. In November, when the quarrel was at its height between the Sunderbund and the Federal Diet, this uneasy spirit went to Berne and asked to be engaged by General Dufour, but foreign officers were not eligible. At last a gap showed itself in the horizon, the Forty-Eight Revolution broke out in Paris, the Republic was proclaimed, and Pierre Bonaparte, who paraded himself as the son of the "Republican Lucien, who had never betrayed his oath,"

was named Chief of Battalion in the Foreign Legion by the Provisional Government. There was a clause authorising his unlimited stay in Paris, and he availed himself of it to seek and obtain election in the National Assembly for a Corsican constituency. When the mob assailed the Assembly on the 15th of May, this fierce Corsican behaved well. He stood up on his seat and cried, "Hold, respect the popular sovereignty!" In the terrible days of June, he also behaved well, braving the Red Republican rioters of the Saint Martin Faubourg, and having a horse shot under him. He was loyal to friendship and consistent to the convictions of his boyhood. Whenever Louis Napoléon was attacked, he defended him with vehemence; when the expedition to Rome was proposed, he emphatically raised his voice against it. He made a speech approving of a declaration that the independence of the Roman States was inviolable, adding that

the French troops should go there but to protect them against foreign coalition, in other words that they should checkmate Austrian and Neapolitan intermeddling by their own intermeddling.

Pierre Bonaparte, while in seclusion in the Ardennes after a Parliamentary session, was urged to present himself at the headquarters of the regiment in which he held the rank of Chief of Battalion. He felt that he was a Frenchman—the feeling was natural—and objected to joining as a foreigner the army of the nation in whose National Assembly he had been welcome. He was right, but such was the annoyance betrayed at Saint Cloud at his disinclination to embark for Africa that he concluded it was but necessary to show himself there to fully establish his claim as a Frenchman. Accordingly, he got leave of absence from the Assembly and steamed from Toulon to Algeria, where he arrived on the 9th

of October, 1849. He took part in the siege of Zaatcha—a brave part too. Arabs, inspired by fanaticism, supple and robust from an open-air life of exertion, are no mean foemen. They led the French a devil's dance for years. In the trenches outside the stronghold of the indigenes, the scion of the Bonapartes distinguished himself, but not more so than an intrepid English sergeant, one Smithers, who moistened the sand with his blood. He killed two sheikhs, and then he bade farewell to the plumed wars and hied him to France. Sometime in Corsica, sometime in Belgium, sometime at Paris, his days passed, and of the multitude at Paris not one in ten thousand knew of his existence—not one in a thousand had even heard of his name. Such is fame of a kind, which may be a comfort to some parochial hero wrapped up in self-adoration, but whom nobody notices when he slinks with cautious mien into a London pawn-office.

But this untamable Bonaparte leaped to renown by accident—to a renown too ugly and too wide to be welcome. His was not a figure well known at the Tuileries, I think I have said. This may be the cause: he married a woman of the people, the daughter of a cabinet-maker in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, who in later days set up a milliner's shop in the West-end of London, and failed. For a Prince to have an amour with a workman's daughter is a mere lapse, easily comprehensible, venial; for him to wed her is an awful and unpardonable violation of the canons of social morality!

I hold that when Pierre Bonaparte married that woman of the people he did the bravest act of his life—enhanced his escutcheon and did not impoverish his blood.

Albeit this wild Bonaparte was a *persona ingrata* at the Tuileries, and boasted that he desired to lead the life of a private individual,

he could not refrain from putting his finger into the hot pie of political polemics—and a very hot pie and unsavoury into the bargain it was, as I believe I have already more than hinted. It was noticeable that the caricaturists were all against the Empire, André Gill, Robida, Grévin and the rest—it is so much more easy to draw a face ill-naturedly out of proportion than to make it gracious and handsome. Some of their pictorial satires were excessively cruel, and as coarse as anything that ever came from the pencil of Gilray, but with a more pungent and expressive underlying sarcasm. *La Lune* (The Moon) was the title of one comic illustrated periodical; it went too far, and was suppressed. The next week it reappeared with an ingeniously altered frontispiece, and the name, *L'Éclipse*. The playwrights were restrained from assaults by the curb of the Censure. But the journalists carried their violence to excess in such prints

as the *Rappel*, the *Réveil*, and the *Marseillaise*. They wrote not with finely-pointed pens, but brutally slashed and hacked at their victims. Theirs was not rapier-play but tomahawking. There were exceptions among the anti-Imperialist publications, the *Figaro* for instance; but that had always been an opportunist organ, and it may be an error to take its Will-'o-the-Wisp vagaries seriously. One morning it came out in perfect *fac-simile* of the official journal, containing a number of governmental decrees in orthodox style, and in the exact typography of the genuine *Moniteur*, appointing some of the bitterest enemies of the *régime* to portfolios. It was exactly as if the *London Gazette* were to appear to-morrow with Her Majesty's approval of Mr. Warton as Privy Councillor, naming Mr. Labouchere Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Healy Chief Secretary for Ireland, under a Coalition Ministry led by Mr. Parnell and Lord Randolph Churchill.

So audaciously clever was the hoax that it was successful—so successful, that the editor of *Galignani's Messenger* positively handed slips of it for translation to his colleagues—until Paris lowered eyebrows uplifted in astonishment, and broke into one huge Homeric explosion of laughter. The strangest feature in this freak of the inventive M. de Villemessant was, that his grotesque perversion was a foretokening of what did come to pass not long after. Paris laughed at his mock Cabinet; but Paris laughed at the wrong side of its mouth when the Commune uprose with its debauched Prefect of Police and its swaggering Generals from the *cabarets*, and would gladly have welcomed the imagined Ministry it once derided.

A headstrong, irascible man like Pierre Bonaparte, who had medulla in his spine of a surety, but whose brain-matter was not of the best quality—an impetuously valorous but irre-

decmably stupid man—had no business to interfere in this conflict of sharp wits.

Hard knocks were more in his line than hard words. And, by my troth, hard words were employed in the controversies under the Empire —not such comparatively gentle language as drops from those who warm up on the merits of rival flowers at Daffodil Conferences, or discuss such questions as the judicious length of ballet-skirts in that corporation of pompous enthusiasts, the Church and Stage Guild. But we are improving in this sphere of art, as bear witness recent examples in Parliament and the Reviews.

Pierre Bonaparte could and did hit hard in his own rough, intemperate way. He wrote a letter to an obscure journal published at Paris in the Corsican interest, in the course of which he roundly declared that those natives of the isle who did not hold Napoléon in high esteem were no better than *furdani* (beggars) and *vittoli* (traitors),

that the market-porters should give them a *touching* (italicised in the original) lesson, and that, indeed, they would already have thrown their *stentine per le porette* (this is a vile phrase that will not bear being rendered), had they not been held back. One Louis Tommasi, a Corsican advocate and publicist, taking these expressions to himself, retorted in the same tone, and the wild Bonaparte sent in a mad challenge in which he paradoxically stated that, although be considered it beneath him to enter into argument with a creature of his kind, he would go half-way from Paris to Bastia to cross swords with him, and that he calculated he would make a rent in his body that the doctors could not patch. This was on the 8th of January, 1871. The following day the *Marseillaise*, of which Rochefort was editor-in-chief, published a galling article on Pierre Bonaparte and his family, which kindled in the Prince such a fury that he swore he never would rest

satisfied until he held "the insulter-in-ordinary to the Empress and Prince Impérial" at his sword's point. Accordingly, he compiled a challenge to Rochefort, which had in it more of the defiance of the drawcansir than of the spirit of ancient chivalry (if such a thing ever existed).

It was full of taunts. For example, there were such phrases as the following: "I am anxious to know if your inkstand is guaranteed by your breast, but I own I have a mediocre confidence that it is." "Your constituents, I hear, have imposed on you an imperative mandate to refuse all reparation of honour and to preserve your precious existence." "If you consent to draw the bolts which render your honourable personality inviolable, you will find me neither in a palace nor in a château, and if you call, I can promise you they will not say I am from home."

That duel never came off. On the following day, Monday the 10th of January, two journalists

called on Pierre Bonaparte with a challenge from a brother Corsican, M. Paschal Grousset, who considered himself offended by the expressions used towards Tommasi, who was his friend, and whose journal he represented at Paris. A game of cross purposes, and involved comedy—these defiances and counter-defiances, which would be ludicrous were not the end so tragic. Grousset's challenge was courteous and sent in the proper form, that is to say, not directly, but through the medium of intimates. One of these was M. Ulric de Fonvielle; the other was Victor Noir, "the big, boisterous, broad-shouldered young fellow, with crisp black hair and laughing red face," whom I described in the second chapter of these reminiscences.

It was his first audience with a prince, and his last. Pierre Bonaparte shot him through the lungs.

The Corsican was unacquainted with either

of his visitors. His own recital of what happened, written while still under the influence of the emotions called up by the terrible event, has fallen into my hands and will bear transcription.

Writing of Noir and de Fonvielle, he says:

"They presented themselves with a threatening air, their hands in their pockets. They said:

"'We are entrusted with this letter.'*

"I said: 'With Rochefort, willingly. With one of his journeymen, no!'

"'Read the letter, though,' said the taller, gesticulating and using a loud tone.

"I answered:

"'It is read right through. Do you identify yourselves with it?'

"I had my right hand in the right pocket of my trousers, in an energetic attitude, on my little five-chambered revolver. The tall fellow

* That from Grousset, praying them, as his seconds, to seek reparation by arms.

struck me violently on the face, the short one drew a pistol, *à six coups*, from his pocket. I fell back two steps and fired at the man who struck me.

"The other bent down behind a *fauteuil*, and tried to fire at me from that position. But he was unable to cock his pistol. I advanced two paces towards him and fired a shot which cannot have hit its mark. Then he ran away and reached the door.

"I might have fired again, but as he had not struck me I let him go, although he had his pistol still in his hand.

"The door was open. He stepped into the next room and turned his pistol against me. I fired another shot, and at last he left."

That is one side of the case. Reviewing it calmly and dispassionately from this distance of years, the first thought which occurs is that both parties were in the wrong. Ulric de Fon-

vielle should not have entered any man's house armed, nor should Pierre Bonaparte have received him as if he were a burglar, with his hand upon his weapon. Ulric de Fonvielle, being armed, should have known how to use his pistol. The whole question of Pierre Bonaparte's justification for having taken the life of poor Noir, the scapegoat, hinges upon that alleged blow. Candidly, I would not place much faith in the evidence of either de Fonvielle or Bonaparte in the sad, the abominably sad, affair, for both were too indiscreetly excited and too immediately interested. But there was one piece of circumstantial testimony which might have meant much. The kid glove on one of Noir's hands was burst. It is only fair to add that the boy's sister stated, with tears in her eyes, that he had bought a pair of gloves specially, and that he had requested her to button them carefully as he was about to call on a prince, a real live prince, and that he

wished to look *chic*. She noticed that they were rather tight. Assuming that the blow was struck, it cannot have been severe, hardly severe enough to have warranted others than princes and Corsicans in exacting human life in return. But that is for the casuists to determine.

Noir, on receiving his wound, staggered into the *porte-cochère*, leant against the wall, sank to the ground and breathed his last. When the nearest doctor arrived he was in the final gasp. Ten minutes had scarcely elapsed from the moment he was struck by the bullet until the full-blooded young giant lay still and glassy-eyed—a lump of clay; he had not uttered a word in his agony. Strong as he was, and however much he may have desired to speak, he could not, for the little leaden messenger had hit him under the left breast, and penetrated to the vital regions. The body was carried to the home he had quitted a short while previously.

A ghastly sketch of the corpse as it lay in the winding-sheet was pencilled by André Gill, lithographed, and exposed all over Paris. The Radical papers went into mourning; in short, no effort was spared by the malcontents to exploit the event against the innocent Emperor, who must have been the unhappiest man in his realms on that Black Monday for his dynasty.

As for Pierre Bonaparte, he was carried a prisoner to the Conciergerie, where he seems soon to have recovered his usual spirits.

The funeral of Victor Noir was the occasion of a popular demonstration. It had not much of the element of solemnity in it; the faces of the mourners, like the skies above, were sullen rather than sorrowful. The garrison of Paris was confined to barracks; it was whispered that batteries of artillery were kept ready horsed, and that any attempt at a rising would be sternly

met; there were those who joined in the function who had revolvers concealed on their persons—the major part I should think—and panted to grasp the opportunity of raising the barricades and invoking the God of battles. But more prudent counsels prevailed, and it was well. The Imperial Guard was loyal; the populace was ill-armed; revolver-pellets would stand poor chance against grape; the Revolution would never have got beyond the stage of *émeute*, and Paris gutters would have run crimson with blood foolishly spilt, as they often did before, and, I fear me, often will again.

A humble graveyard outside the Porte Maillot was the scene of the interment. Desperate-looking knots of workmen, with red buds in their button-holes, had collected in the neighbourhood of the dwelling of the deceased from early morn, and as the hour for the cavalcade to start drew near, they packed themselves in front.

The upholstery of death was very plain; if there had been any idea of forming a procession it was abandoned, and as the funeral came in sight on the main avenue to the cemetery, there was no staid procession to be noted but a common hearse, dragged by hand, and a surging mob, angry-faced, dark-browed, uproariously pressing round a black vehicle, on the top of which a bare-headed man, the Millière whom I had seen at the meeting in the Rue Doudeauville, was gesticulating and speaking. It was impossible to catch a word he said, but one could infer from his manner and movements that he was dissuading them from adopting some course of action. The time was not yet ripe. By jerks the irregular mass advanced, gathering in numbers and confusion as it went. It was impossible to get anywhere near the coffin; it would have been risky to venture into that throng, but it was clear to the most superficial observer that this was less a rite of

religion or family than a political manifestation. There were more maledictions than prayers or tears at the frenzied ceremony.

Mr. Bowes of the *Standard*, and I, who were present at the scene, drove back as soon as we had assured ourselves that no riot was likely. I have often thought since what hazard we ran on that memorable day on the edge of that excited multitude, if one demented Republican had fired a shot. Even an accidental shot might have done the harm. Those who assisted at the Noir funeral would have need of mourners for themselves. To a man, ay, to a woman, they would have been slaughtered like rats. They were in a complete trap, outside Paris proper, in a wide thoroughfare, which lent no aid to street-fighting of the insurrectionary kind, but was admirably adapted for disciplined street-fighting. Twenty bursts of canister and one charge of cuirassiers would have demoralised the irregular forces of Revolution, and

then the infantry, quickly tramping up, could have finished the bloody work at its ease. My friend and myself had no strong sympathies either way; we were present in the fulfilment of our duty, and, by the natural logic proper to such emergencies we, being simple and innocent, would have been, among the first shot down. But, then, what a consolation in the requiem, *fallait pas-y-aller!*

I had been "devilling" for Mr. Bowes very industriously about this momentous period, when Paris was, without exaggeration, the point on which the eyes of the world were focussed. Some of my work pleased the then directors of the *Standard*, and I was gratified by a request to take a trip across the Channel to meet and have a chat with them. On the eve of Good Friday, of all days in the year, I arrived in the great metropolis, and, in my ignorance of its peculiarities, repaired to a dingy family hotel to which I had been humorously recommended in

the neighbourhood of Covent Garden. No boulevard, little sunshine, shutters up in the Strand, a depressing air of Sabbath gloom, is it any wonder that my first experience of the English capital was disappointing? I had an undoubted attack of the blues, but I forgot all that in my cordial reception at Shoe Lane.

The Editor said he liked my style, the Manager said he liked myself, and the result of our interview was a commission to go to Tours to describe the trial of Pierre Bonaparte before the High Court of Justice as Special Correspondent of the *Standard*. Here, at last, the gate to fame and fortune was unlocked to me.

CHAPTER XI.

Pleasant Touraine—A Printer's Error—Baby Boucicaut's Big Hit—A Duke's Stratagem—The Levelling Principle in Photography—The High Court of Tours—The Correspondent of the *Times*—George Augustus Sala—Dissertation on Clothes—Portrait of Pierre Bonaparte—Rochefort as a Witness—Paul de Cassagnac—Millière in a new Character—An Arm of Defence—"A Mort!"—A Ridiculous Muss—Anecdotes.

Tours was an old love of mine. I had visited it some years previously, partly for pleasure, and partly to report on the working of the boys' reformatory at Mettray. It is a fair, regular city, with open streets and leafy promenades in a plain, beside two fine rivers, in the heart of a district teeming with fatness — a rich, self-satisfied, courteous, healthy city. They eat well, drink pure wine, and speak pure French there.

I went down early, as I was anxious to renew my acquaintance with the monuments, the walks, the agreeable society of the place, and eke its flavoursome *rillettes*, and the vintage of Vouvray. There used to be a proverb, "*jamais femme de Tours ne vit la fumée d'un camp ennemi.*" That proverb no longer holds good. On the 21st of December, 1870, the 19th Division of the 10th German Army Corps flung some rifled cannon-shot into it, when it readily requested to be favoured with the company of a Prussian garrison. The invaders did not comply, but took up cantonments in the neighbourhood. However, on the 19th of January following, General von Hartmann, commandant of the 1st German Cavalry Division, was good enough to occupy the city with a mixed detachment of all arms.

The Touraine (the ancient provincial name is more grateful than the modern one of "the department of the Indre and Loire") was once a

possession of the English Crown, and is still a favourite residence of English annuitants who have a difficulty in making both ends meet at home. It abounds with Celtic antiquities, such as dolmen, menhir, and tumuli, with churches and châteaux in excellent repair and in execrable ruin; but to me it was interesting for three reasons principally. Firstly, it had been embellished by the genius of Scott. I have reason to recollect it. They may well call him the Wizard of the North, for his "Quentin Durward" once sent me speeding across the breadth of Europe, from the German Ocean to the Adriatic, to shoulder a musket for glory and twopence-halfpenny per diem. Secondly, it had produced La Vallière, and still produces women as beautiful—nay, was there not in that fateful year of Seventy as buxom a lassie as ever coaxed a monarch of his smiles in the very building where the dear minion flashed upon the world, now

turned into a hotel? And thirdly, and lastly—above and before all—it was the birthplace of Honoré de Balzac. As to a shrine, I went to the house in the main street, the Rue Royale, where the marvellously-gifted author of the "Comedy of Human Life" was born. It was tenanted by one Monick, a dentist, and as I was suffering from a decaying molar I had it extracted there. In alluding to the circumstance in a letter to the paper, I wrote: "I had a tooth drawn where Balzac cut his." An intelligent compositor fancied he had detected an omission, and kindly resolved to supply it, so that on publication, to my horror, the passage read that I had a tooth drawn where Balzac cut his *throat!*

Tours is rich in historical associations, and wandering about its streets by moonlight after an excursion to some of the delicious spots in the laughing fertile landscape around, with its luscious pastures, its odorous orchards, its fruitful

vineyards, and its fine country houses, the abodes of peace and plenty, I was reminded of many noteworthy stories of the past. The Hôtel de Semblançay exists but in a few stones; still the tales of Boucicaut, who first saw the light there, are as pat among the gossips of the Touraine as if he were a man of the last generation. He was a Marshal at five-and-twenty. At twelve years of age he fought at the battle of Rosebecque, and faced a very tall Fleming. The giant shoved him aside, knocking his battle-axe out of his hands with the handle of his own.

"Go to your mother to be nursed," he cried. "The French must be hard pushed for men when they send babies to fight."

"Do babies in your country play at this game?" said the young Boucicaut, stretching the big Fleming dead with a thrust from his dagger. Pretty little anecdotes like this are common in France and Navarre.

There is the Tower of Guise in the middle of the cavalry-barrack, so called because of the detention there of the Duke de Joinville, son of the Balafré. His escape might have been invented by Alexandre Dumas. Returning from Mass at eleven o'clock, he proposed to his warders to try which could hop the quickest to the top of the tower for a wager. Through deference, they let the Duke get the start; he ran forward, precipitately shut an obstructing door behind him on the second storey, and with the aid of a cord a laundress had secretly fetched him the night before, and one extremity of which was held by his servants, lowered himself along the wall. An alarm was given, several shots were fired, the servants let go the cord and the Duke fell, injuring his knee. Nevertheless, he glided hot-foot along the ramparts by the Loire. An old woman caught sight of him and shouted, "*le Guisard se sauve.*"

He continued his flight, stole a baker's horse, exchanged it for a better, and got clear away beyond the Cher. He would have been caught but for a good-natured fellow who pulled at the bridle of a trooper who was pursuing him. The plan succeeded that once. The modern plan is safer: Bribe a turnkey, or change your clothes with a stonemason who has the run of the prison.

The archæologist should by no means neglect to turn into the edifice where the departmental archives are kept in Tours. They are conspicuously interesting for those which are not there. During the Terror, upwards of two hundred charters emanating from such personages as Charlemagne, Louis the Débonnaire, and Charles the Bald, were to be seen. They were burned by the reformers of the epoch, for the satisfying cause that they were polluted with the stain of feudality and superstition. Enlightened reformers!

There is a picture-gallery near, which, of course, I strolled into. When you are tired of nature and the companionship of your fellows, pictures are almost as agreeable, and they do not speak when you do not choose to make them. Print-shops and picture-galleries, like poverty, introduce some strange bedfellows. In a window in the Strand one can see photographs of popular preachers and winsome dancers, masters of intellect and notoriety-hunters, philanthropists and poetasters, Mr. Spurgeon and Kate Vaughan, Professor Ruskin and Mrs. Weldon, the Earl of Shaftesbury and Mr. Martin Tupper, all in giddy diversity, cheek by jowl. In the museum at Tours there is the same jumble of variety; the sacred elbows the profane. I am not particular, but one could wish for a more delicate eclecticism when he comes on the portrait of Ninon de l'Enclos after that of Fénélon, a courtesan side by side with a divine, and surveys "La Vallière

having her Fortune told," in close proximity to the "Crowning with Thorns."

But I must get back to the trial of the untamed Bonaparte, or the critics may sicken of my maundering, and adopt the local saying, "*c'est interminable comme l'œuvre de Saint Maurice.*"

Not having a file of the *Standard* with my account of the proceedings before me, I must depend on a fickle memory for my sketch of what struck me in the High Court. The ordinary court was used, an oblong room, more lightsome and less stuffy than those dens of Themis so beloved in England. Over the President's bench was a Crucifix; that, a bust of Napoléon III., and a portrait in oils of the great Napoléon, were the only adornments of the place. Admission was by ticket, and these were courteously extended to the foreign press. As all the leading papers of Europe and some of America had deputed

their best men to attend, there was small space for the general public. One London paper, the *Daily News*, I think, was admirably served by a lady Special, a countrywoman of my own, and as Mrs. C. was as judicious as she was witty, the *Daily News* had no reason to repent it of its choice. But her presence rather distracted the attention of some of my younger French colleagues. The journalist who sat beside me was a quiet, easy-going grizzled man with nothing in features or dress to mark him out as above the status, intellectually or socially, of those who make fortunes over counters, and make speeches at vestry meetings. A high-coloured stoutly-built man, with an ordinary shrewd business-like face, and appareled in an ordinary blue coat without pretensions to fashion in figure or cut. He might have been anything but what he was —a substantial yeoman, a successful punter in the betting-ring, a prosperous country mercer.

When I came to know who he was, and what were his functions, I was confirmed in a scepticism I had long entertained as to the so-called science of Lavater. There is as much charlatanism on a thin substructure of the true amongst the physiognomists as amongst the mesmerists and phrenologists. But a grosser deception than that regarding character and occupation awaited me. I was actually mistaken in his nationality by his voice—and this is a point wherein I set some value on my power of discrimination.

His accents when he spoke filled me with pleasure, and I remarked as he nodded and sent an unctuous good morning across to a colleague on a bench on his right:

"I beg pardon, sir, you are a Cork man, are you not?"

"A Cork man," he echoed, in anything but a gratified tone; "no, sir, I'm an Italian."

I could see he was irritated, and yet I pledge

myself, I honestly meant to compliment him. This Italian, I afterwards ascertained, was Signor Antonio Gallenga, the representative of the *Times*. He created quite an excitement among his French neighbours on account of the latter circumstance.

"Look, look," they used to whisper, "he is the *Timbs*" (this is the nearest approach I can make to their pronunciation of the name of the great paper); "the *Timbs*, my dear, and he hardly takes a single note."

"Ah! be certain," another would exclaim, as he tapped his forehead, "he has it here, here. The *Timbs* knows how to choose its men."

Assuredly, I, too, was surprised at the calm way the Italian discharged his duty, merely jotting down a pencil-mark in his book once in an hour or so, but he was watchful and calm and did not miss a single point. He had a letter of introduction to the prisoner; but, for some

reason, Pierre Bonaparte did not care to receive him, for the which Pierre Bonaparte was a fool.

The gentleman whom Gallenga had saluted was one to arrest your gaze in a crowd. Burly, florid, with smooth-lying, pitch-black hair, and a half-waggish, whole intelligent sunshine of meaning, with a blending of humour-clouds, mischief-clouds, and kindness-clouds, playing over his broad, mobile, sympathetic countenance, you could not help asking who he was. I did; I asked myself, and the correct answer came. That, I felt instinctively, must be George Augustus Sala—and my heart sank within me. It was foolish, I own now, but the feeling was irresistible then; I lost all my pluck at the notion of being pitted against this Prince of Pressmen, this wondrous word-spinner who threw a warp of golden threads across the necessary woof of the commonplace, and who was sitting there jocund and

self-possessed as if his pitch-black hair were not wreathed with greenest of journalistic laurels, unconscious that he was being worshipped in secret. I had always been an admirer of him who had written of London by Gaslight and Daylight; I had been long anxious to meet him—but not as a rival, flattering though it might have been to the vanity of some people. I had been first in the field, and while I had the field to myself I candidly believe I did write graphic letters—at all events, I satisfied my literary conscience—but now that Sala rose on my horizon, my powers left me. I was too anxious to do well, and the consequence was I became fidgety and finical. Had I but followed the advice of my excellent Bowes—"beware of zeal"—it would have been better. The accomplished penman was there in the flesh before me, and I devoured him with my eyes and studied every detail of his attire so that it

remains to this day fixed on my retina. What a weakness! some will say; who would gloat over the costumes in the Hall of Kings? But to me the Rex Bohemianorum is object of far deeper interest than the Autocrat of all the Russias, Horatius Flaccus than Cæsar Augustus. Sala had an artistic appreciation of colours in his suit, which was cheerful and sober withal—a blue coat, but of finer cloth than Gallenga's, a black velvet collar, a white waistcoat and a magenta necktie, with lavender gloves and light trousers. One might lean over the railings at Rotten Row, deliver a lecture or pay a morning call in this capital general service suit. Put on a black cravat and trousers and button the coat, and one might go to a missionary meeting; or, at a pinch, attend a funeral in it. His gloves were very neat and fitted well. As he laid them beside him I was sorely tempted to steal them; indeed, I would have stolen the right-hand glove

if I thought the right hand with its charm of skill were in it.

The appearance of the great English journalist made a favourable impression on the Frenchmen of the press. What if they had seen him in the historic fur coat! There is much in clothes, and it is only a vastly great personage like Thomas Carlyle who can afford to contemn the ethics of dress and go about anyhow in a soft hat and a slovenly Inverness cape. Lord Lytton, I think it is, who says that no collar and a wisp of a tie will make any man a blackguard, and Lord Dunraven (himself a Special Correspondent), unwittingly plagiarising from the novelist delivers the same opinion. The word had evidently been passed that the champions of Radicalism should present themselves in their best bibs and tuckers. They all wore clean linen, and were careful in the adjustment of their neck-cloths. There was no suggestiveness of Clerken-well Green democracy. In fact, some of them

were too elegant. Paschal Grousset, a slim young man, looked more like a dandy of the boudoirs than an architect of barricades. He must have spent at least five anxious minutes waxing his moustachios.

The prisoner was ushered in amidst a breathless silence, sandwiched between the buzz of suspense and of comment. A couple of gendarmes preceded him, and took posts at his sides as he stepped from an opening in the wall to the right of the audience directly into the dock, an elevated enclosure with a desk with a big fastened inkstand in front. It was lucky that big inkstand was fastened. There he stood, with an unmistakable Bonaparte face, under the portrait of his illustrious uncle, stigmatised as a wilful murderer—a coincidence that to inspire a volume of historic souvenirs and grim meditations. He held himself erect, this man who had been born centuries after his time, this strange admixture of visionary and

condottiere, swarthy, bull-necked, bold-eyed, with strong maxillary development, and frame of iron. As he glared around, one saw that he must have keenly felt his position. A believer in the doctrine of metempsychosis might be pardoned for imagining the soul of an elderly lion of Atlas to have passed into that stout human body.

Insufferably wearisome are the details of legal process in France. The *acte d'accusation*, a prolix and one-sided history of the crime and of the antecedents of the prisoner was read through in a sing-song voice; but as I have given the narrative of all that is necessary to be known at length in the previous chapter, I refrain from repetition. Then the Public Prosecutor unfolded his tale in those peculiar rising and falling tones which send one to sleep. The witnesses were called and passed up a space in the middle of the hall, until they stood opposite the tribunal in a line with the prisoner. As they were sworn they held up

the right hand. Such of them as were in custody for Press, or rather political offences, were led in from an adjoining yard.

When Rochefort was summoned, the prisoner, who had never met him in the flesh, leant forward, anxious to see his pet antipathy, and seemed somewhat surprised as he measured the pamphleteer from head to foot. The scrutiny over, he resumed his attitude of affected tranquillity, with a look which apparently meant "This Rochefort is not of the rowdy type I expected, but he would stand poor chance against me, rapier to rapier." The irrepressible Henri was essenced and gloved, and scrupulously attired in black; he might have been lifted delicately out of a bandbox, so painfully trim and neat he was, not a speck or a crease in his clothes. He never once turned his gaze towards the dock. When he had finished his evidence, he made a courtly inclination, retired, and was told he might stop amongst

the auditory during the rest of that day's hearing, as he might be wanted again. The journalists made room for him, and by chance he took a seat but one remove from me. A pretty nosegay was passed to me with a request that I would hand it to M. Rochefort, and convey to him that it was sent him by a lady. He bowed, sniffed it, and paused a moment, as if searching for an epigram, but the epigram was not to be picked up.

"Thanks," he said. "Kindly tell Madame that from a gentleman it would have been equally acceptable."

This was clearly not what he meant to say. He intended to utter some well-turned phrase of gallantry, but the atmosphere of the High Court and the ordeal he had passed through were not favourable to the ready manufacture of happy impromptus.

"Perhaps, Monsieur le Comte," I artlessly remarked, "you would prefer a bunch of violets."

Monsieur le Comte looked at me sharply as if to recall who I was, but failing to recognise me, he shook his head, and his face brightened into a winning smile.

Paul de Cassagnac created the greatest interest after Rochefort among the provincial spectators. There was a flutter of excitement under the corsets of the ladies—they were to be seen there as they are to be seen, to their shame, in the Old Bailey when sensational murder trials are on; silks rustled as they rose in their seats, and there was a faint murmur of whispered words mingled with the *frou-frou* of flounces as they craned forward to catch a better view of the hero of two score duels. There is nothing which wields such a potent sway over the gentle sex as a well-nourished repute as a swashbuckler who habitually eats fire and quenches his thirst in copious draughts of blood. The redoubtable Paul strode in with his cavalry swagger, and all the easy

serenity begotten of good looks and a wrist like a steel spring. My faith! he did look a fine animal, tall, well-shaped, and well set-up, a mature D'Artagnan, and he knew it, as he moved forward amid the murmured homage of those silly women. As he reached the witness-stand he nodded to the prisoner, who returned him a glance of pleased intelligence. I really forget what he was called to testify, but I rather fancy it was that the poor Prince was a deeply-injured individual, and the meekest and sweetest-tempered being in the universe.

Other witnesses came and went, the female relatives of Noir in deep mourning — their hysterical sobs disturbed for a moment the repose of the prisoner; but the dramatic honours of the representation (for to that it had resolved itself) were carried off by Millière, the orator of the Rue Doudeauville and of the funeral. He was led in a prisoner. As he modestly and almost

mincingly walked up, so anxious not to discommode any one, there was a devil gleaming under his drooped eyelids. As if by merest accident, he twisted until the prisoner had a full view of his back, and so respectful was his manner, and so honeyed his accents, as he demurely clasped his hands before his chest, that he quite put the President off his guard. It surely must have been the blunder of some officious agent to have suspected such a very nice man as this, one so full of patience and amenity, of any solidarity with the fomenters of sedition and disorder. His answers were unhesitating and given lowly, but distinctly, in a slow, even, measured way, that delighted the partisans of Noir as much as it discomposed those of the defendant. At last he softly dropped some expressions that cut Pierre Bonaparte to the quick, and the elderly lion of Atlas lashed to fury, jumped up and blurted out a rough correction.

"May I claim the protection of the honourable court against the unfortunate accused?" mildly pleaded Millière.

This enraged the prisoner fourfold, and in the end the President had to interfere before decorum was restored. When it came to the witness's turn to be cross-examined, he was asked was it not a fact that he had a revolver upon his person when he was arrested?

"Ah! I can explain that. My name is Jean Baptiste, and on my fête-day, the 24th of June last, my wife considerately determined to make me a present. As we live in the suburbs of Paris, and as they are infested with vagabonds under the Empire who are dangerous to peaceful citizens returning from their work, she thoughtfully selected a revolver. It was a mere toy—an arm of defence."

"The helmet and the cuirass are arms of defence. A revolver is an arm of offence," roared the prisoner.

Millière looked supplicatingly towards the President. When his examination was concluded, he was complimented on the exemplary manner in which he had given his evidence, and as he passed by the tribune of the Paris journalists on retiring, there was a perceptible wink wagging one of his drooped eyelids.

The dramatic scene of the trial was reached, when to the rear of the hall, under the gallery, was raised a shout of "*À mort! à mort!*" This cry of death to the Bonaparte caused, as may well be imagined, a terrible commotion. The President grew pale; the officers of the court clutched at their gowns; ladies fainted; advocates, journalists, spectators, turned to the quarter whence the sound had come, half in curiosity, half in fear of what might transpire next; the hands of the gendarmes flew to their sword-hilts. The prisoner bounded from his seat as if he were about to clear the barrier in front, and

caught at the big inkstand as if to wrench it from its place and hurl it in the direction of the voice.

The lion of Atlas was in full fury, bellowing, with arched back and bristling mane; the true nature came out then. The door behind was quickly opened, and the wrathful Pierre Bonaparte was pulled inwards by his guards, chiefly, I believe, as a measure of protection. They did not know what this cry might portend; it might have been the signal for some attempt upon the prisoner's life.

When the mouse emerged from this convulsed mountain, it turned out to be a meagre, most pitiful mouse. The cry, "*À mort!*" was raised by M. Ulric de Fonvielle, the gentleman who was with Noir when he was killed, cowered behind the *fauteuil* and did not use his revolver. That was the time he should have carried out his homicidal designs on the Bonaparte. He let the

chance pass; and now he only obtained ridicule for his pains and a prompt committal under lock and key. "I suppose that is what you classic fellows call a ridiculous muss," whispered an American colleague, leaning over to me.

What a marvellously spirited description Sala gave of that, the most thrilling episode of the celebrated trial! There was one little touch in it that showed the master of his craft. He drew a pen-and-ink sketch of a stolid attendant at the proceedings, who most religiously came every day, but whom nothing apparently had power to move. This yokel listened and gazed blankly as he munched biscuits or bit at a pastry. He was sucking an orange when the cry was raised; at last he was moved. He was so amazed at this outrage in a temple of justice that his lips parted, and the juicy, golden-yellow globe dropped upon the floor. That orange—I trust it had existence—supplied the streak of colour that was wanting

to the picture. It will always be coupled in my mind with Russell's "thin red line tipped with steel" in his account of the fight at Balaclava.

In their reports of the trial, the Paris journalists did not go to the trouble of giving verbatim short-hand notes, as with us—there were not a half-dozen qualified stenographers present—but drew pictures of the scene, very lively, but invariably tinged with the partialities of the writer. They entered into details as to the personal appearance of their foreign colleagues, and more or less imaginary recitals of their antecedents. Gallenga was presented as the bosom friend of Mazzini, and Sala as a prolific and most successful writer of burlesques. I am not certain whether I was dismissed as a retired snake-charmer or a Pope's Chamberlain, but I did not object. With the recollection of the means by which Montbard and I had often filled our purses, had I made remonstrance, I would have been churlish indeed.

Taking an evening stroll under the elms on the spacious Mall, Signor Gallenga abruptly asked me how it was the *Standard* had succeeded in getting at the *acte d'accusation* days before it was read in court.

"Ah!" said I, with a knowing glance, "*we* know a thing or two on that journal! Would you not just like to catch me letting you into the secret of how we forestall our rivals?"

To be frank, I knew nothing whatever about it, nor do I to this day, but I could not resist the temptation of assuming wisdom and identifying myself with the paper with which I had been casually connected for almost quite four days. How pippins do swim sometimes!

"I feel as if I could write an interesting book about this city of Tours. The place pleases me much," said Mr. Sala one evening.

I have been on the anxious look-out for the promised book ever since, but my anxiety has

not been appeased so far, which is a disappointment to me, and, I honestly think, a loss to all lovers of dainty literature.

The result of the trial was much what had been foreseen. Pierre Bonaparte was amerced in a fine to be paid to the nearest relatives of the man he had shot.

To me the result was more pleasant. I received a cheque for £40 15*s.* for the week's work, which work I must have done to the satisfaction of the Editor, for I was regularly engaged on the special staff of the *Standard* on my return to England at a salary which quite came up to my then aspirations and my needs.

CHAPTER XII.

The Writer eating his Head off—A London Sunday—Colloquy with a Witty Editor—Commissioned to describe the Passion Play—Sleepy Munich—Mild Dissipation—A Travelled Tobacconist—The Right Royal Beer-house The Maximilianstrasse—In the English Garden—Advice to Strangers—Levée of the Lifeless—Scared into the Other World.

THE trial at Tours was held in March, and for a couple of months afterwards my duties in London consisted of killing time. I wandered to and fro in the great city, studying its whimsicalities; I strayed occasionally into the office of an afternoon to have a chat with the editorial staff as they hung about awaiting the customary consultation as to the subjects for next morning's leading articles; and I punctually called at the cashier's

box on Friday to receive my weekly honorarium. I was gradually familiarising myself with English habits. One of my colleagues had invited me to dine with him on a Sunday in a square in the Bloomsbury district. He did not mention the hour, and taking it for granted that six would be about right, I presented myself at his hall-door in full fig.

Like Rochefort, I was too late for dinner. He had dined at one, and had given me up. There were some cold morsels left which I thoroughly enjoyed, and then, with my unvarying ill-luck I happened to remark artlessly:

"Why, this table I am sitting at is a billiard-table."

"Yes," assented my host, "it is very ingenious. It can be turned into a billiard-table in five minutes."

"Hurroo!" I ejaculated, "how jolly! Then we can have a few games. I adore the green

cloth, though I am, always have been, and always will be, an utter duffer."

"You forget it is Sunday," said my host solemnly, and two clergymen who were present frowned at me reprovingly.

I was so ignorant and wicked, that I was absolutely unaware that it was sinful to play billiards on Sunday; and was so misguided in my instincts that I had failed to arrive at that conclusion by intuition.

After I had satisfied my appetite, my host asked me would I go with him to an evening class he held in a slum not far off. I went and listened gravely to a catechetical lesson on the Scriptures to a pack of dirty small boys. There were prayers afterwards, during which I noticed that three of the congregation were trying zealously who could spit nearest the seam on the back of the jacket of another who had a new suit on and knelt in front of them. One

boy laughed and was expelled. Presently a rotten cabbage-stump flew in by a half-opened window from the street, landing on my nose. Most of the boys laughed. Devotions were dismissed, and a few good little fellows who did not see the fun and had not laughed, got a penny each. I never accepted an invitation from that gentleman again. It may have been he never sent me one.

You ask, why did I not work? Well, suppose there were constitutional infirmities in the way. I never could work without some incentive to exertion any more than I could take a walk for constitution's sake, unless there was some definite object in view at the end of the journey. By temperament I am lazy, varied by spasms of industry during the violence of which I have often compressed a week's toil into four-and-twenty hours. The blame is all to be laid to the account of nature. During that couple of

months I might have written a comedy, acquired a useful knowledge of colloquial Hindustani, devised a dozen new figures for a cotillon, got off Coleridge's "Remorse" by rote, or become an adroit carver; but I did nothing of the sort. I wasted the precious minutes. And yet, on reflection, it can hardly be said they were wasted; for one may work hard, observing men, nourishing thought, brooding over plots of possible stories or dreaming delightful day-dreams, without taking pen in hand. At last the spasm of industry seized me; I felt like an ambitious understudy in a theatrical company, who had rather be in the bill, in no matter how small a part, than aimlessly beating the pavements. I made up my mind, went to Shoe Lane and knocked rather peremptorily at the door of the sanctum. After the ordinary greetings, the following colloquy ensued between myself and the editor.

"Some people," said I, "appear to like to keep willing horses in the stable eating their heads off."

"Some people," he answered, "may object to putting thoroughbreds between the shafts of four-wheelers."

"Hum!" That was all I said. I was taken aback.

"What is the matter with you?" he asked.

"I want work, or an increase of salary."

"Upon my word, you are a most unreasonable fellow. Don't you get paid regularly? We cannot invent work for you."

I took my hat and left, receiving a valedictory hint to the effect that I was the first Irishman on record who was unhappy at having a grievance. And the worst of it was, those to whom I confided my woes laughed at me or gave me their congratulations.

The next forenoon I had a message demanding

my immediate presence at the office. I hurried down, and was told that the work had invented itself, and that I would oblige by going to Ober-Ammergau by that night's mail to chronicle and criticise the Passion Play.

"Passion Play! I know what that is, but I fancied such mummeries were obsolete. Where, please, is Ober-Ammergau?"

"Somewhere in Bavaria; but, please, find out the precise spot for yourself. Good-bye and good luck."

Ober-Ammergau is well known, too well known now, and I am sorry to have to confess that it was I who was principally instrumental in vulgarising it, at the instigation of Captain Hamber, the present editor of the *Morning Advertiser*. I may be excused for my geographical ignorance of what was, at least, in England, a comparatively unknown region in 1870, when I relate that a London literary man of some

eminence positively downfaced me lately that Venice was on the straight route from London to the Bavarian Tyrol. He backed his statement by affirming that another literary man had prefaced his account of the Passion Play (written *ten years* after mine) by a description of the City of the Doges. That was *post hoc propter hoc* with a vengeance.

My trip across the Channel and run through France, the Grand Duchy of Baden, and the Kingdom of Wurtemburg to Munich was effected almost without stoppage. Tired as I was after having been cooped so long in a railway-carriage, I sallied out after a bath, on the night of my arrival in the sleepy capital—the slow city by Campbell's "Isar, rolling rapidly," for a walk round.

It was not yet nine by the clock, and my promenade, recollect, was on the Maximilianstrasse, the local Regent Street. At that early hour of

the evening not a shop was open, and the rare lamps broke the line of thoroughfare in a dim, straggling way that served only to realise the old figure of "darkness visible." I sauntered ever on till I came to a square, with a statue looming up, solitary in the middle, and a large building with massive portico in front, occupying one side —yet not a sign of life. Munich was like a metropolis of the dead. I crossed to the other side and skirted a colonnade, and then for the first time did a noise catch my ears; it resembled the tum-tum one hears outside the window of a provincial post-office, as the time for sending off the mail arrives. This palatial building was the Bavarian General Post Office, and the sounds I heard were the stamping of the letters, I afterwards found, on encountering a night-walking policeman, who wanted the gift of a lucifer match. I retraced my steps towards my hostelry, the "Four Seasons," and passed again by the

side of the large building with the massive portico. A well-dressed crowd was pouring out in steady stream from one of its doors—a serious, sedate, orderly crowd; no crushing, no hurry, not one impatient word. Surely this must be a church or, at least, a temple of some rite, where some Boanerges had been holding forth on the pains of eternal perdition. It was indeed a temple, but of music, not religion, and this quiet crowd was the dissipated "rank, beauty, and fashion" of King Ludwig the Second's *bonne ville* of Munich returning from the opera! As the last figure emerged, a mellow church clock commenced pealing nine, anon a shriller joined in, then one in sharper treble still, and presently a deep re-echoing boom dominated, and then came a fifth and sixth; and I gave up the attempt to distinguish them, and began thinking of Sir Walter Raleigh, who could not get two dials to agree in their note of time. This is the curfew at Munich, I

soliloquised, as I trod the deserted street back to my hotel. And Munich itself impressed me as grander and more doleful than a State funeral—most eligible of residences for an amateur undertaker. And a walk in the Maximilianstrasse, after the opera had closed, was as lively as a promenade in the mouldering Coliseum at inky midnight.

With the morning came a change. I was roused by the trumpets of the cuirassiers returning from their drill. These Bavarian soldiers are big, brawny men, clumsy and rotund, but endowed with immense strength. As they pounded along the flags, puffing their long cigars, their sabres clanking, in their light blue uniforms, and flat, peakless caps, they did not look so spruce as British hussars, but they had weight and would crush down an enemy in an onset. After breakfast in the "Four Seasons," a palace leased by a former king as a caravanserai, I crossed the

street to a large café, where I was told some English papers could be read. Hardly had I taken a seat, when a young girl, with a courier-bag slung at her girdle, deposited a huge earthenware jar, with pewter handle and lid, on a felt disc before me. These waitresses are homely and pretty; they do not dress above their position like barmaids in another country I know of. They do not ape the fine lady—they are ignorant of chains, lockets and rings, and protect their plain print gowns with a coarse linen apron. I happened to leave the lid of my beer jar open, the same waitress quietly took the vessel away, brought it back replenished to the brim, and deposited it before me with a second felt disc. The score is calculated by those discs; the money goes into the courier-bag. As I was looking over the newspapers to select one from London, I was addressed in English:

"Here is *Punch*, sir."

My interlocutor and I fell into conversation. He was a tobacconist and money-changer, and with an eye to business informed me that the best cavendish and latakia and the fairest rates of exchange were to be had at his establishment. I told him my mission in Bavaria, and asked was it true that the villagers of Ober-Ammergau, as Herman Schmid had written, were inspired in their performance by unsophisticated piety. He laughed an incredulous laugh.

"Herman Schmid," he said, "is a romancist. He is as partial to his own countrymen as Sir Walter Scott was to the Highlanders. There is some thought of filthy lucre at the bottom. I have lived long in London—in Shoe Lane!"

And then I learned that although the players did not strut their hour precisely for love of praise, and were not inflated with histrionic vanity, the prices to the house were dearer than to the opera. Of the proceeds, the first fifteen

thousand florins, it is true, were devoted to the charities of the parish, and the next to the defrayment of the expenses of get-up; but every kreutzer beyond went into the pockets of the performers. Still, as there were five hundred in the company, the individual shares from the surplus cannot have been very large.

The tobacconist took me round to the Hofbrauhauskeller, the court brewery, as one of the curiosities of the city. We went into a large yard with lines of forms and a shed at one side. It was full of portly shopkeepers, men in uniform, students with their tiny coloured caps stuck on three hairs, and lumbering mechanics and porters. Each man possessed himself of a numbered tankard, and handed it, with the money, over the counter in the shed, when it was filled from a mighty barrel with the strong "bock" beer only to be had in perfection in the month of May. As your number was sung out, you

clutched at your tankard. A new barrel had to be tapped on the average every half-hour. Between each gulp of the cool, brown liquor, a slice of raw turnip, sprinkled with salt, was eaten. This is the correct mode of expressing its flavour from the malt. The raw turnip serves as the olive between the courses at dinner, or black coffee at a smoking *séance*—it corrects the palate.

My prejudices of overnight were completely dissolved as I strode out, with more beer under my belt than I care to acknowledge, into the warm sunshine that gleamed cheerfully down on the trees in the Maximilianstrasse. I bent my steps towards the bridge over the Isar. The street quickly broadened into a garden-like *platz*, shaded with blossoming chestnuts linked one to another by leafy festoons; the green of a shaven turf, enclosing flower-beds, gaudy *parterres* of tulip, and sprigs of sweet-

smelling mignonette, refreshed the view on either side of the gravelled roadway, while rustic seats were disposed here and there for the accommodation of those who wished to take their ease. A noble castellated building of a brick-red colour (I almost thought it was modelled in terra-cotta) rose in front of the bench where I had sat down. That, I was told, was the Deaf and Dumb Institution. At my back another edifice, equally splendid, but more stately, rose, and on its portico I could read the words, "*Meinem Volke Zu Ehr und Vorbild.*" It was the National Museum erected by Maximilian II., "In honour of my people and as an example." The four corners at the middle of the *platz* were sentinelled by bronze statues in heroic size, of the philosopher Schelling; of the warrior Deroy, who fell at Pultousk; of Fraunhofer, the glazier's apprentice, who rose by the patronage of a Bavarian king to be one of the first

opticians in the world; and of Count Rumford, in whom I took an interest as soon as I discovered he was an Englishman. He had been a general in the army in America at the outbreak of the war for independence, but had become so attached to the colonists that he declined to fight against them. He was offered a diplomatic position in Munich in connection with the British Embassy, and got as fond of the Bavarians as he had been of the Americans, quitted the service, and joined that of his new friends, to whom in dying he left in testimony of his affection a magnificently diversified park, which is called the English Garden.

I passed on to the bridge through the over-brows of which the Isar rushed along in eddies of yeasty foam, with a continuous hiss, down successive levels of terraces, sweeping like an easy staircase, until it subsided into calmer mood below, where it ran like a current of oil-

in ebullition, a stripe of whity-brown, mid enamelled meadow banks. On a hot day the brawl of this bustling stream has the most deliciously cooling and soothing effect on the nerves. The brawl, I say advisedly—for is there not something tranquillising in the very noise of a cascade? I have always found it so, at all events. Turning to the left at the Maximilianeum, a building on the height that bounds the vista of the Maximilianstrasse on that side for the gratuitous education and board of students who show special aptitude for the higher employments of the State — a sort of poor scholars' University, in short — I entered the English Garden. I am at a loss for words to paint the beauty of this park. Fancy a bit of Eden on the margin of a capital—labyrinthine paths under verdurous alleys; here a bubbling spring, there a nest of forget-me-nots; hill-sides belted with a thick growth of trees, through

the foliage of which the river in the valley below gives a glistening peep now and again; by-and-by there is an opening in the wood, and a velvety sward spreads out to the feet like a carpet, while one can discern a Greek temple in the distance, or the white walls of a cottage, the smoke from the chimney curling in poetic spiral in the still air, or even the grotesque architecture of a Chinese pagoda. Then the voice of Gungl's dance-music—Gungl is known wherever there is a toe to trip it on fantastically, from Quito to the Quinconce of Brussels—steals on the senses, steeping them in a bath of ease most luxurious, as one reposes in a rustic bower of the pattern of those for "talking age and whispering lovers," and indolent Special Correspondents made. Altogether I did enjoy my stroll in the English Garden, and if I do not go the length of saying "See it and die," I do of maintaining that it is worth all the worry and expense of a voyage

from England to see. This draught from Nature's cup put me in such humour for a draught of beer at Tambosi's in the Hofgarten—only think of that, a *café restaurant* within the precincts of the Royal palace—that I came back determined to utter not one syllable of evil of the burgesses of Munich, neither to insinuate that they swill beer from exaggerated mustard-pots till their stomachs swell and brains get sodden; nor to pretend that each citizen requires three chairs, one to put his hat on, another to put himself on, and a third to put his stick on; nor yet to slyly suggest that doctors of philosophy from Erlangen are plentiful who are eloquent on the Globigerinæ at the bed of the ocean, but who have absolutely not yet heard of Mr. Wilkie Collins's last novel.

It would be trifling with the reader to enter into guide-book notes of Munich; he will get all that in Murray, and besides, everybody travels

nowadays, and everybody is as likely as not to know more about the place than myself. But I may be permitted to submit a few hints from the budget of an experienced globe-trotter:

Do not be seduced into drinking more than a couple of *seidels* of the glorious beer at first essay. If you do, your night's rest will be disturbed. It is a hopeless ambition to indulge that a stranger can ever become as mighty a beer-drinker as a Bavarian, but by slow gradations one may acquire the faculty and make a tolerably respectable figure behind a tankard.

If you are a connoisseur of the weed, avoid the ordinary cigars; they are almost as bad as those common in Spain, cheap and nauseously nasty.

Accustomed to English blankets and quilts, the nice tourist may be very uncomfortable under a German feather-bed. He will be sure to perspire in his first doze and kick it off, and then

he will wake with the sensation of freezing. If you cannot get a blanket in the hotel, borrow a second top-coat, over that and your own throw your plaid, and over that again the handiest hearth-rug.

Never enter a strange bed except with stockings, drawers, and merino vest on, as simple precaution, not to be despised, against damp sheets. Some of these artifices I picked up attending English race-meetings.

Lastly, unless he affects the ghastly, let the inquiring tourist avoid going to the cemetery. It is the custom in Munich on the decease of any person to remove the corpse to a species of Morgue in the symmetric and well-tended burial-ground. He is laid out there on a bier, the hands gloved in white, and to the index finger of one hand a wire communicating with an electric bell is attached. On the slightest movement this bell is set jangling, and summons a physician and

attendants with restoratives. This is meant as a safeguard against premature interment. Such unspeakable horrors have occurred — one may easily imagine scenes like that pictured in Wiertz's gallery of nightmares at Brussels during a cholera visitation—but I am bound to say after persevering research I did not come across a single authenticated case of the bell having been rung at Munich. The same system, I have been told, prevails at Osnaburgh and Frankfort; but this I cannot vouch. In some of the Swiss cantons I have heard that it is usual to drive a sharp silver bodkin into the heart before committing the body to the earth. That impresses me as the most effectual preventive of live burial.*

Death is supposed to be the universal leveller. That all depends on the way in which the phrase

* I would be grateful for any information on this matter from those who know. A letter to care of the Publishers is safe to catch me eventually.

is taken. Some of us may be laid to rest in a mausoleum, and some cut up on a dissecting-table. At Munich, the humble folk are arranged in rows in one hall of the Morgue; the wealthy and the noble are enthroned on gorgeous catafalcos, canopied and surrounded with velvet drapery, floral wreaths and lighted tapers, in another. The show can be seen by all who like it—seen for nothing. The windows of the halls are uncurtained, the doors may be opened. Outside on a tablet are written the names, occupations, ages, and cause of death of the deceased, who are holding their last silent levée. The duration of their stay in the Morgue is regulated by the nature of the malady to which they succumbed, and their years. From it to the grave in the adjoining God's Acre, the funeral proper takes place.

Lest the melodramatists should run away with the notion that this would furnish subject for a harrowing stage set of the realistic school, let me

warn them that they have been anticipated. The late Watts Phillips risked a representation of a Morgue on the boards of Drury Lane. It was unworthy of him. The British public would not have it. My blessing on the British public!

And now, to conclude this chapter, a true story concerning this house of the departed, which I had from the lips of Mr. Pfungst, a wine merchant, settled in London, whose mother's portrait has a frame in the gallery of the Beauties of Bavaria in one of the palaces of Munich. A set of students were drinking and smoking in the beer-house where they held their club, one wild night, when murky curl-clouds were sweeping across the sky, now and again moonlit, and the spirits of the storm made their moaning voices heard by housetops and chimney-cowls and around street corners. One of their comrades had died that day. The conversation turned, as among German students it will turn, on the

philosophy of the unseen. Startling propositions were hazarded on the problem of life, on apparitions, on the possibility of converse with the beings of another world.

"There is no other world," said one young sceptic, who doubted the existence of a soul, because it never came in contact with his dissecting-knife. "It is all chaos; when the breath is out of us the show is over."

"There is another world, I hope," remonstrated a comrade. "Surely, we are not as dogs!"

The sceptic said, if he believed that, he would never cease experimenting on corpses until he might happen to worm out of them the secret of the future. But he looked on them as lumps of clay, no more. Whatever intelligence they had was gone. They were to be regarded only as so much matter to be got rid of quickly, lest it might breed pest. As for those who

believed in ghostly legends or in the modern folly of spiritualism, they were the dupes of their own willing credulity, and a sane man should only laugh at their degrading superstition.

"Then you don't believe in ghosts — you're not afraid of the dead?" was asked by one of the company.

"Why should I be? A ghost can neither drink my beer nor slash me in an encounter."

"Yet, I wager, you are afraid of ghosts."

"I bet you a supper I am not," retorted Hans, the sceptic.

"Then I lay you a supper for all of us on this spot to-morrow night, that you do not go alone to the cemetery where our comrade is laid out, touch him and call on him to answer you, cut a scrap off his shroud as proof that you were there, and bring it back here to us."

Hans accepted the challenge and left upon the spot. He did not come back.

Next morning there was an awful whisper among the students. His body had been found cold and stark outside the Morgue, a piece of cambric—the scrap off the shroud—in his clenched hand, and his coat-tails caught in the door. The conclusion was that the moon, barred with shadows, fitfully playing on the white faces of the dead, must have wrought a powerful effect upon him, and that when he was sallying out, after having fulfilled his task, a strong gust must have suddenly slammed the door and imprisoned his blown-out skirts. In his state of nervous excitation, he may have fancied he was guilty of an impiety, and that, as a punishment, the outraged dead were dragging him back. The autopsy showed that he had died of heart-disease.

END OF VOL. I.

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